

# DIVINE PROVIDENCE,

## OR THE

### THREE CYCLES OF REVELATION.

#### CHAPTER I.

#### THE EXISTENCE OF GOD.

“THE invisible things of Him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead <sup>1</sup>.” This is the argument of St. Paul, charging the heathen world with *voluntary* ignorance of God; His eternal power, and Godhead, though invisible to the eye, being visible to the mind through their evidences in the frame of the universe <sup>2</sup>.

<sup>1</sup> Rom. i. 20.

<sup>2</sup> This voluntary ignorance chiefly referred to the heathen errors relative to the Divine *attributes*; for the existence of a supreme Deity was the general belief. Thus Cudworth says, “As for the generality of the Greeks, whether they apprehended

The process by which the human understanding may be led to the discovery of the Supreme Being is brief and clear. We see matter round us on all sides, moved, moulded, and animated; we know, from an experience so universal, as to act with the force of an instinct, that matter cannot move, mould, or animate itself. Those effects then must be produced by something which is *not* matter. The human mind knows but two classes of existence, matter and spirit. It therefore decides

God to be a Mind, separate from the world, or the Soul of the world; it cannot be doubted, that by the word *Ζεὺς*, they commonly understood the Supreme Deity, the Father and King of gods; the Being frequently invoked as *Ζεὺς πατήρ*, (probably Latinized into *Jupiter*,) and *Ζεὺς ἀνὰ*, (*Intell. Syst.* v. 2.) The chief Legislators also professed an intercourse with the Deity as a sanction to their laws; as in the instance of Minos, Solon, Lycurgus, and Numa, (though this is a very different thing from Warburton's statement, that they *founded* their laws on the Immortality of the Soul.) Strabo even acknowledges Moses to have been among those inspired transmitters of law, (*Geog.* l. 16.) The grand shape of Heathen error was the polytheism. By *dividing* the attributes, it formed gods of all degrees of propensity and power. Varro reckons 300 Jupiters alone. Hesiod 30,000 deities. The progress of vice must be boundless, when every man might sanction his excesses by the example of a deity fabricated on his own model, (*Terence*.) The Greeks reckoned *five* classes of superior beings:—the Supreme God; the Olympian Gods; Demons, ruling the air; Deified Heroes, ruling the world; Evil Demons. Yet they seem to have had some notion of the Unity, (*Hill, Instit.*); and to have occasionally acknowledged the necessity of Revelation. (*Plato, de Rep. and Alcib.*)

that this producer must be a Spirit'. But all things are also evidently constructed with a view to an end. An end implies intelligence; the accomplishment of an end implies power; the skill of the accomplishment implies wisdom. The Spirit

' The Materialist controversy was strongly agitated during the last century. Both sides perplexed the question by wandering from the facts. The Immaterialists, by assuming that every Materialist must be an Infidel; the Materialists, that every Immaterialist must be an enemy to fair investigation; both falling into the absurdity of limiting Omnipotence! Yet the true question lies in a sentence; *What are the facts?* It is as obviously absurd of the Immaterialist to deny that the Almighty *can* create a *thinking Material*, as of the Materialist to assert, without *evidence*, that he *has* created it. The *power* of the Deity must be without limit. The point is, whether it has been exerted? The *onus* clearly lies on the Materialist. Let him show that the properties of matter have *any similitude* to the faculties of spirit; that weight, solidity, expansion, crystallization, &c., have any analogy whatever to judgment, memory, will, imagination, &c. This he has never been able to show, this he cannot show; and therefore as a question of *fact*, his system is totally fallacious and unphilosophical. It is remarkable that the three principal advocates for the Materialist doctrines, found it as difficult to believe that the Church of England was a Scriptural Church, as that the soul of man was *not* a compound of clay. Hartley, who had been intended for the Church, revolted at the subscription of the Thirty-nine Articles; and became a physician. Priestley's "Disquisitions on Matter and Spirit," were followed by his "Treatise against the Divinity of our Lord;" and that again, in natural descent, by a system of philosophical necessity. Belsham, whose "Elements" embody the doctrines of his master, was, like him, a Socinian minister.

which moves, moulds, and vivifies, a world so full of motion, form, and life, must then be at once intelligent, powerful, and wise; and be all those in a degree totally surpassing any work of His creation. But that Spirit must either have had a cause, or be itself the cause of all. Even if we take the former supposition, we shall only conceive a chain of causes which leads us at last to one great universal cause<sup>1</sup>:—a self-existent Being, the origin of all faculties and power; and this Being we call God. Thus far the mind might advance by the mere view of nature; but the same process led to the unity. Reason proved that one God *must* exist. It could prove no more; and therefore the heathen plurality of gods was a corruption, generated by the passions, in defiance of the understanding.

\* <sup>1</sup> No metaphysical subtlety can satisfy the human understanding of the non-existence of a natural connexion between cause and effect. Independently of the universal and obvious relation of the words; the whole course of things presented to the human eye, is only a succession of causes and effects. But an impression so wide as to be universal, so plain as never to admit of a question with the countless majority, and so immediate as to be instantaneous, must be taken for the direct language of the Divine Intelligence to the mind of man. The late Dr. Brown's conception, adopted from Hume, that it is merely a name for *sequence*, is contrary to all experience; and, as Sir J. Herschel well observes, he has committed "the *enormous oversight* of forgetting all that vast class of causation which arises from the human will."



To the Jew a larger knowledge was given by revelation. The *moral* attributes were expressly declared on Divine authority. To the Christian a still larger knowledge was given of both the physical nature of the Deity, in the existence of the Trinity; and the moral nature, in the offices of the redemption: both already shadowed forth to the piety of the Jew; but reserving their full light for the understanding of the Christian.

Nor are we entitled to conceive, that we have yet reached the limit of this knowledge. Nothing is more conformable to the Divine agency than the gradual illustration of truth according to human fitness for the discovery. The man who studies Scripture with the humility and the reverence to which alone its fulness will be expanded, is constantly struck with indications of facts beyond the direct grasp of the understanding—the influence of the Spirit, the unutterable prayer, the communion of saints and angels, the union of the Deity with His Church;—doctrines which to our present knowledge offer no distinct idea, but whose development, when the mind shall be equal to their reception, may fill us with the highest sense of the Divine grandeur, throw all previous knowledge into eclipse, and be the source of unlimited wonder, astonishment, and joy.

Some of those developments may be prepared for man, even on this side of the grave. The

race who shall live, when the Divine kingdom is complete upon the earth, and Christianity the religion of all, may be as much in advance of the clouded attainments of our day, as the Christian is in advance of the Jew. It is also perfectly conceivable, that this process will terminate neither with our existence here, nor with human nature. The general action of Providence, the moral glory, the instruments and energies of mercy, and that wondrous part of the universal plan, which consists in transmuting evil into good, and controuling, without force, the free agency of created minds, may offer to the successive orders of spirits a perpetual and ascending scale of knowledge, filling their understandings with the delight of perpetual discovery, and raising their hearts to new heights of adoration.

Even of the physical attributes of the Deity, constantly as they are in operation before our eyes, we know only enough to know that they are immeasurable. We give names to four or five ; but those are names not for faculties, but for vast classes of faculties ; for mental and physical instrumentality, which may, and must be, boundless. What is the attribute of Omnipotence, but a general expression for distinct powers of action applicable to all purposes ; and which may amount to thousands or millions ? What is Omniscience ? How many distinct faculties are necessary even to the limited knowledge of man ;

what memory, forecast, judgment, invention; what ardour of imagination, what severe, counteracting controul of reason? But of the faculties of the Deity we can have no comprehension, without reference to the faculties of man<sup>1</sup>; and since such is the disposal of Him by whom all things have been made in wisdom, such must be the right ground of comprehension. What then must be the variety, force, and infinitude of the faculties essential to the purposes of the Creator, Sustainer and Ruler of an universe, implying a knowledge of all the properties of things, of all the operations of mind, of all the past and the future; the moral springs and government of all those ranks of spiritual intelligence which do his bidding, through the extent of an empire infinite to all eyes but His own; the coming capabilities of existence in those unknown systems which are yet to give down His glory with perpetual illustration to ages unborn!

The existing frame of nature itself seems to imply that He has attributes of which we can

<sup>1</sup> Hobbes, on the principles of the sceptical theory, denies this obvious truth in a curious passage. "Since knowledge and understanding within us are *nothing but a tumult in the mind*, raised by external things that press the organic parts of man's body; there is no such thing in God, nor can they be attributed to him." *De Cive*. To this the answer is, that knowledge exists not in the power of the external thing, but of the mind which comprehends it. The contrary establishes Atheism.

form no conception. Creation may be one of those. This faculty, or act, can scarcely be included under the head of omnipotence; for omnipotence is but *power* in its fullest extent; and the only idea of power conceivable by the human mind, is of action on existent things. Creation, the calling of existence out of nothing, has no reference to any idea of man: but, of all the attributes known, it is the one which most directly draws the distinction between the Divine and human nature; and this may be among the principal purposes for which it is developed with such boundless and astonishing magnificence in the frame of present things. It instantly raises the mind to the contemplation of a Being whose “thoughts are not as our thoughts.” All the other known physical attributes, and all the moral, exhibit the Deity only as a more perfect man; the only view under which his excellences can be the object of human example. Creation establishes the impassable line; all thenceforth is separate, mysterious, supreme.

The next question is,—for what purpose was the universe formed? Our chief authorities on those high subjects have severally held, that it was—for the Divine glory;—or for the delight of exerting the Divine energies in production;—or for the display of the Divine power. Some have subordinately united with those objects benevolence; but the theory most compatible with the Divine

nature is that which pronounces the great leading purpose to be benevolence. Glory, or power, as primary motives, cannot be divested in the human mind of a tinge of selfishness, a passion inconceivable in the Deity. But to the fullest activity of beneficence in the Divine nature, no limit is to be thus assigned. The mere delight of calling intelligence into being, of communicating happiness, of filling the void of space with ardent existence, of raising millions of millions of bright and rejoicing creatures into consciousness, would be a motive worthy of the supreme Source of virtue. That other motives, born of this impulse, might join in the recompense of this great act of heaven ; that the Author of an universe, pausing from his work, and pronouncing it to be the full realization of his own holy and beneficent idea, might additionally feel the joy of a parent, the power of a sovereign, and the still loftier and more incommunicable glory of a creator, is perfectly consistent with supreme perfection. But such feelings must be the result, not the origin of action. The only word in which God ever defined his nature was “ Love.”

One chief purpose of the material universe is evidently the instruction of spirits embodied in flesh and blood, perhaps the lowest rank of immortals. Our imperfect acquaintance with things beyond the range of matter compels us to include all intelligences under the name of spirit ; yet nothing is more probable than that, under this name,

we unconsciously include vast classes of existence fully as distinct from each other as spirit from matter, and as numerous as the grades of intellect between man and Deity. We have certain knowledge of at least three orders of intelligence, widely distinct from each other—man, angel, and God ; spirit, incapable of intercourse with external things but by bodily organs ; spirit, holding that intercourse without the aid of body ; and spirit, itself the supreme Source of both body and mind.

Nor are we entitled to conceive this process of instruction limited by the existence of the material universe. It is of the nature of intellect to be in a constant condition for the increase of its ideas. Scripture distinctly predicts, at least, one universe to come, totally differing from the present in its moral features—an universe, “ in which dwelleth righteousness ;” sin, or the capacity of sin, existing no more. Even this simple expression may indicate an immeasurable change in the whole fabric and constitution of that universe ; for the capability of falling into guilt is so deeply mingled with all the moral qualities of the present state, that we can scarcely disengage it from our idea of moral existence ; and it practically forms so large and influential a principle in the government of the universe, that its disuse seems to imply an entire alteration in the guidance and means of the system. But why shall not the physical change

be as conspicuous as the moral? We have distinct declarations, that even before the final subversion of the existing frame of things, some extraordinary physical changes are essential to render man capable of sharing the perceptions of the period following the grave; that "flesh and blood" cannot enter the new kingdom of God; that some powerful conversion of the natural body into what is named "the spiritual," must take place even in those who are alive at the second coming of our Lord, and who are to be summoned to immortality, without having tasted of the grave. The declaration, that the light "shall not be from sun and moon," but from God; imperfectly as it can yet be comprehended by us, palpably implies a great physical change. Undoubtedly the almost infinite grandeur of the existing universe indisposes us to contemplate the extinction of so astonishing a work of the Divine hand. Yet this is an impression wholly comparative. What to Omnipotence can be the construction or demolition of an universe? Labour, contrivance, and costliness, are important only to man. If the highest purposes of creation are the intellectual happiness of the creature, and the honour of the Creator; and if those purposes can be more effectually answered by a succession of universes, we can have no right to doubt that the succession will exist. Gravitation is the leading physical principle of our universe. Is this the only conceivable principle on which a system of

nature could be formed ? Might not phenomena of equal beauty, and perfect novelty, be formed on the principle of a tendency *from* the centre ? Might not vibration, motion in curves, and a hundred other modifications of motion, be adopted as leading principles, by Him whose powers are inexhaustible ; and each of those principles be followed out into applications of the most boundless variety, the most profound science, and the most stupendous grandeur ? There is nothing in the present constitution of things, or in the known attributes of Deity, to invalidate in the slightest degree the Scriptural declarations, that the “ heavens shall be rolled up as a scroll,” and the earth be reduced to ashes ; that the whole existing frame, even to its remotest limits, shall utterly pass away, and be followed by another. It may be equally followed by thousands, each opening a totally new treasure of science, each cheering and elevating the intellectual progress of the people of immortality, by throwing open some still broader province of knowledge ; each, in its succession, invigorating and ennobling the faculties of created beings by some more illustrious insight into the secrets of power and wisdom that dwell with the Almighty.

And why shall not the moral attributes take their share in those great demonstrations of the Divine Essence ; and love, holiness, magnanimity, long-suffering, each united with the physical attribute



most fitted for its expansion, be successively developed on the scale of an universe; and constitute a further unveiling of the Divine nature<sup>1</sup>. And thus for ever and ever, a perpetual discovery of wonders, carrying the mind forward in a ceaseless ardour of intellectual triumph, filling the heart with floods of happiness, ever swelling, ever deepening; the faculty of joy still increasing with the possession, an endless possession. For it is He that is the supreme Wonder; the height and depth of all wisdom; the source of all virtue, energy, and science, unfathomable and inexhaustible. The Scripture phrases of “growing from glory to glory, *as in the presence of the Lord* ;” the being like him, by *seeing him as he is* ;” the beatific vision; are language inexplicable, but by an elevation of our nature through an elevation of our knowledge. Thus the language of the Psalmist, the Apostles, and all those emi-

<sup>1</sup> In all the pursuits even of human science, what are we actually studying, but the Creator? for this world, or the world of worlds, this universe, or all that shall follow, can be but pictures of the Divine ideas. As the artist conceives his work before it is formed, and the machine or the picture is but a second stage of the process,—a realization of the idea already living in the intellect,—so we can conceive of Deity, only that the ideas of all things, ever formed, or to be formed, are present to his contemplation, and that the successive universes can only be disclosures of that contemplation, divine thoughts made accessible to the understanding of men and angels:—  
“ Nil in sensu, quod non fuerat prius in intellectu.”

ment servants of the truth, who pronounced that all their happiness was included in a nearer access to God, was not merely holy rapture, but sound reason. It was the voice of the most solid philosophy, that exclaimed, “ Whom have I in heaven *but thee*,” and there is none on earth that I desire *but thee*. It is on this ground that we are summoned in Scripture to offer not merely our obedience, which is the natural return for the Divine beneficence ; but our zeal, honour, and adoration ; that we are commanded to have God perpetually in our hearts, to burn as with the flame of a living altar before him, to love him with our whole soul, and mind, and strength ; a degree of affection unrequired for simple obedience, but justly demanded, because the knowledge of His nature is capable of authenticating the most entire affection, zeal and honour.

. On the same ground, we are commanded to “ praise him always ;” not that the praise of man can be essential to his glory, nor that it forms even a strict requisite of obedience ; but that his nature justifies the most perpetual homage, and that the more decisively man devotes himself to the view of the Divine excellences, the more he will find his thoughts spontaneously kindling into adoration. Thus the most rigorous conclusions of the understanding, and the most glowing impulses of the heart, coincide in the scriptural language ; “ Praise ye

the Lord, praise him ye servants of the Lord. For *I know that Jehovah is great, that our Lord is above all gods. I will speak of the might of thy terrible acts, and will declare thy greatness.*" It is in this feeling, that, the heavens are declared to be "filled with praise;" the angelic hymns to "cease not day or night;" a perpetual thunder of "Holy, holy, holy, Lord God of Sabaoth," to peal from the millions round the throne—Descriptions intended but to convey by human images, and but faintly conveying, the astonished delight and overwhelming wonder that envelope, as in a circle of glory, the races of spirits permitted to approach the presence, and contemplate the perfections, of the Lord of all.

## CHAPTER II.

### CREATION.

THE FIRST DAY.—IN THE BEGINNING GOD CREATED THE HEAVENS AND THE EARTH.

The work of the first day was the summoning of the whole material universe into existence by the Divine will'. It has been idly surmised that this declaration applies only to our globe and its

<sup>1</sup> This was the uniform doctrine of the earlier Greek philosophy. That "the earth had a beginning, and was capable of decay; that the stars were of the nature of fire, and that the soul was immortal," are among the chief tenets which Diogenes Laertius (*Proœmia*) ascribes to the Egyptians, the teachers of the early sages of Greece. Pythagoras spent twenty-two years in Egypt. Cicero (*De Natura Deorum*, l. i. c. 25.) states the tenet of Thales to be, "*Aquam esse initium rerum; Deum autem eam mentem, quæ ex aqua cuncta fingeret.*" Thus the two great leaders of the Ionic and Italic schools coincide, and we have the testimony of Aristotle himself, that all the philosophers before him asserted the creation; γερομενον μὲν οὐκ ἀπαρχὴς εἶναι φασιν. (*De Cælo*, l. i. c. 10.) The word בְּרָא is cited by Fagius from R. Nachman, as the only word in the Hebrew to express such a production out of nothing.

atmosphere. But this sense is totally irreconcilable with the use of the word *heaven* in Scripture,—with the “ thrones and dominations of *heaven* ;” with the gathering together in Christ of “ all things both in *heaven* and earth ;” with the wisdom of God made known to “ the principalities and powers in *heaven* ;” with the “ *heaven* and the heaven of heavens,” declared to be incapable of bounding the grandeur of God.

The solar system has been as idly surmised to be the limit of the declaration. But the natural meaning of the word “ heavens” is the whole region of the starry worlds. The text gives us no caution against taking the word in its widest meaning. We have no proof whatever from science, that the entire universe was not created in the same moment. The few recorded disappearances, or the sudden splendours of stars, may be accounted for by natural causes<sup>1</sup>. There is as.

<sup>1</sup> Those instances are remarkably few ; and by the new observations of the double stars, will probably soon be accounted for. Some of them may be revolutions of the stars round each other, which alternately eclipse and throw them into full light. Among the attempts to account for the brilliancy of the star in Cassiopeia in 1572, was suggested a general conflagration, as the dimness of others has been ascribed to a general deluge. Undoubtedly the earth, in the year of the deluge, must have exhibited to any other orb capable of marking the changes on its surface, an aspect strikingly different from that of other years. The lost stars in the stern of Argo, &c. may be yet discovered in the course of some periodic revolution.

little appearance of decay. To the investigations of the finest science all seems to be as it was from the beginning ; the starry system—an illimitable realm of worlds, all bearing that strong general similitude of laws, forms, utility, and beauty, which marks them for the work of one Supreme Will.

This day was also the first of the existence of Matter<sup>1</sup>. For, of matter we have no conception,

Something like this change of brilliancy is perceivable even in the planets of our system : in Venus peculiarly, there is a remarkable effulgence about once in a cycle of seventeen years.

<sup>1</sup> From the extreme difficulty with which we disengage our thoughts from material images, we cannot be surprised, that the eternity of matter was a favourite doctrine among the later Greek philosophers, and the heathen world in general. The popular stoic dogma was, “ that there are two principles or origins of all things, an essence without quality, matter (*υλη*), and the Divine wisdom (*λογος*) which acts on matter, (*Diog. Laert. V. Zenon.*) The doctrine of Plato hovers between the Jewish doctrine of creation, and the popular tenet of the active and passive principles. Plutarch states him as saying, *Ο γαρ θεος ουτε σωμα το ασωματον, ουτε ψυχην το αψυχον εποησεν*. The apparent meaning of which is, that God made both soul and body out of pre-existing essences. Chalcidius, on the *Timæus*, asserts that the dogma of both Pythagoras and Plato, was “ that the constitution of matter was the work of providence,” which may imply that they doubted its eternity, if their tenet were not limited to its form.

The usual argument against the eternity of matter, is, that if it be eternal, necessary existence must belong to it as well as to God : if necessary existence, infinite power ; if infinite power, it might create anything, must be an active principle, *cannot* be a passive one ; and is God, or may be many gods. This argu-

but as it exists within the visible universe. We have the declaration of Scripture, that Spirit existed before ; for God is eternal, and angels saw the birth of the world. “ Where wast thou when I laid the foundations of the earth ? declare, if thou hast understanding. \* \* \* \* When the morning stars sang together, and the sons of God shouted for joy <sup>1</sup>. ” (*Job xxxvii. 4.*) •

*And the Earth was without form and void, and darkness was upon the face of the deep.* The sacred historian, having given a general declaration, that the universe was brought into existence, and brought by the hand of God ; describes our *Globe* in the state in which it was left by that primary action <sup>2</sup>.

ment is as old as Tertullian. (*Advers. Hermog. c. 4.*) But a more obvious and succinct refutation is, that we can have no knowledge of the eternity of matter, but by reason or revelation. Reason compels us to ascend to a First Cause ; but that cause must be intelligent, and active, a spirit. Reason thus gives us no knowledge whatever of the eternity of matter, a passive principle ; while revelation directly ascribes the origin of all things to God.

<sup>1</sup> This allusion to the morning stars does not imply the existence of the heavens previously to that of the earth. The title seems to have designated the angels, spectators of the rising universe, or perhaps still higher natures. It is borne by the Redeemer himself, in the Apocalypse, as the source of spiritual light and joy ; “ I am the root, and the offspring of David, and the *bright and morning star*. ” (*Revel. xxii. 16.*)

<sup>2</sup> The Hebrew names of the heaven and earth, are derived merely from their relative position ; (a confirmation of the

Its first aspect is that of a mass of matter uninhabited by any form of life, and covered with waters, and utter darkness. But a second energy of the Divine will, suddenly comes to change this aspect, and Light starts into existence by a simple command, whose expression is the sublime of power. "God said let there be light, and there was light<sup>1</sup>." Whether this new and wondrous product was educed from matter; or was the work of a new creative act, as might almost be conceived from the peculiarity of the Divine command: its general dissimilitude to matter, its splendour and subtlety, its absence of all weight and all impulse, the instantaneousness of its production, diffusion, and extinction, place it on the verge of immateriality; unless, with gravitation, electricity, and their kindred influences, it forms an actual class between matter and spirit<sup>2</sup>. But

(originality of the language.) The heaven, *Hashamaim*, from שָׁמַיִם *sublimis fuit*. The earth, *Haaretz*, from אֶרֶץ *depressus fuit*.

<sup>1</sup> Light. *Aur* אֹר the fruitful parent of words expressive of brightness, dawn, &c. Aurora, Aurum, Orior, Orion, &c. The names of the portions of the day are all descriptive, and exhibit a primitive language. Morning, (*Bachar*) is the *fissure, or opening* of the skies; בָּקָר *fidit*. Evening, (*Gnarab*) is the *gentle subsidence, or setting* of day, עֶרֶב *leniter subiit*. Darkness, (*Koshek*) is *awe or terror*, חֹשֶׁךְ *horruit*.

<sup>2</sup> The velocity of the gravific fluid, or influence on which gravitation depends, has been calculated by the French astronomers at several thousand times that of light, and by others at several millions.



another extraordinary phenomenon was now to be evolved.

“ GOD SAW THE LIGHT, THAT IT WAS GOOD ; AND GOD DIVIDED THE LIGHT FROM THE DARKNESS ; AND GOD CALLED THE LIGHT DAY, AND THE DARKNESS HE CALLED NIGHT ; AND THE EVENING AND THE MORNING WERE THE FIRST DAY.”

This was the first existence of Motion ; for we *can* have no idea of motion previously to matter. It requires extension, shape, impulse ; all qualities of matter alone. The motion of spirit is a contradiction in terms. What can be the motion of bodiless intelligence ? The appointment of day and night implies the revolution of the globe : the commencement of motion in the earth and in the universe. For it is only by that revolution that day and night can possibly interchange round the globe. •

The subject has been perplexed by the common error of assuming that the sun and stars were not *created* until the third day ; and that light must thus have existed without a source or centre, and the division of time must have equally anticipated its measures <sup>1</sup>. But the difficulty disappears, by

<sup>1</sup> Some ingenious efforts have been made to reconcile the narrative with the supposition that Light was formed *before* the Sun : but they are unnecessary, and they are ineffectual. That light may exist independently of the Sun, is a matter of common experience : but we have no instance of light existing

our following the plain intimations of the historian. He tells us, that the first act of creation produced "the heavens and the earth." We have no right to limit this declaration, and doubt that it produced alike sun, stars, and our globe; and we have no right to go beyond the declaration, and suppose that any orb of the universe existed at that moment, but, like our own, in utter darkness. All had now felt the influence of light together; the suns, as central reservoirs and founts of illumination, pouring it on the planets; and the planets, reflecting it on each other and the suns. But another great act was required: for we have no indication whatever, that the universe was created in movement.

If the systems had remained stationary, there would have been an equal effulgence of light; but the planetary hemispheres exposed to the central orbs, must have been dazzled by perpetual splendour and unmitigated fire; while the opposite hemispheres must have withered in perpetual ice and night. One half of every star or planet of the solar system, and of every system formed on the same principles, must have been totally lost to the purposes of existence; half an universe a waste; or

totally *per se*, without any *substratum* whatever. Nor can we conceive the light embodied in a cloud, sufficient to illumine the globe; and not merely the globe, but the solar system; for to this extent the expedient must go, if it is to be the substitute for the Sun.

the waste must have been quickened by a totally new course of divine expediency. Each inhabited globe must then have contained two races of beings, as distinct in their natures as fire and frost,—excessive light and excessive darkness. The inferior animals, and the plants, in every habitat, product, and instinct, must be essentially and irreconcilably different; and man, and the beings analogous to man in the other planets, must be divided, in all instances, into two vast discordancies, as incapable of mutual aid or association, as the inhabitants of the Earth and Saturn. But, to give him the full range of his world, to endow him with the opulence of all its regions, to sustain his powers and enrich his nature with the still nobler opulence of sympathy, and intercourse with the whole family of human existence, was the work of a single expedient—the earth revolved!

It is remarkable that this expedient, simple as it appears, remains among the most inexplicable portions of the mechanism of nature. The revolution of the globe on its axis is not the result of any force yet known to Science. And it has had the still more striking peculiarity of continuing, from age to age, without the slightest deviation.

This almost miraculous exactitude was necessary to the well-being of the world; for, of all the incidental changes of nature, perhaps the most formidable would be a change in the mea-

sure of the daily rotation. The increase of a second a day since the creation<sup>1</sup>, would not merely break up every calculation, and embarrass the general order of society, but totally destroy the adaptation of animal and vegetable life to the course of nature. But it must also be a force perpetually renewed; for the friction of the atmosphere, visible in the effect of the trade winds; the tides, and even so slight an impulse as the various flowing of the rivers on its surface, must be felt in a long series of years. Still, the motion is inflexibly sustained; and this sustentation must proceed from the perpetual impress of some physical agency, which has hitherto baffled the researches of man.

THE SECOND DAY.—GOD SAID, LET THERE BE A FIRMAMENT IN THE MIDST OF THE WATERS, AND LET IT DIVIDE THE WATERS FROM THE WATERS.

This act was the formation of the atmosphere. The air, let loose to expand by its own elasticity, was seen upraising the waters by its property of attracting vapour and holding it in solution and suspension. Thus was constituted the region of the clouds, the קָוָה, the στερωμα, the fixed reservoir of the rains, the great covering and canopy

<sup>1</sup> The calculation is obvious, that even the *hundredth* part of a second a day, would, in six thousand years, amount to a change of six hours.

of the globe<sup>1</sup>: the whole preparatory to laying open the land, which it was thenceforth to shade and fertilize<sup>2</sup>. The history still preserves the authoritative phrase that marks the power of the Creator. The command is given, and it is inevitably fulfilled. God said, "Let there be a firmament; and *it was so*." This vast region of air and clouds henceforth shares the name of heaven with those higher regions, whose existence was the first act of creation. The air and clouds constitute all of heaven that presents itself to the eye of man during the chief portion of his daily existence; the absence of the sun alone opens to us the expanse of the true skies; the heaven of the globe passes away, and we see the heaven of the universe.

<sup>1</sup> "Nomen *Rachang* non erit *expansum*, sed *firmitum*, seu, ut vocabulo Vulgatæ utar, *firmamentum*. Atmosphæra nubes portans. In Ezek. i. 21, &c. basis, pavementum, currus Dei." *Michaelis, Supplem. ad Lxx. Heb.* 2386.

<sup>2</sup> The suspension of so immense a weight of waters in the sky, has been an old and a just source of wonder. "Quid esse mirabilius potest aquis in cœlo stantibus," is the well-known and natural exclamation of Pliny.—*Hist. Nat.* 31.

The evaporating power of the air is enormous. Dalton calculates the annual evaporation from the surface of England and Wales alone at 115 millions of tons. The evaporation of the Mediterranean carries off the whole volume of water forced into it by all the great rivers. It is even calculated that the quantity of water suspended in the air is equal to that of the ocean.

THE THIRD DAY.—“AND GOD SAID, LET THE WATERS UNDER THE HEAVEN BE GATHERED TOGETHER INTO ONE PLACE, AND LET THE DRY LAND APPEAR; AND IT WAS SO.”

• On this day was to be displayed that surprising and most beautiful spectacle, the first organization of life. While the waters of the firmament were left to range unconfined over their vast region, the waters still remaining on the globe were to be restricted within a boundary. But this restriction implies that a receptacle must have been provided for them, and the surface of the globe broken in, to a great depth and extent, before they could have left any large portion of the earth free. By whatever means this immense disruption was effected, whether by the volcano and the earthquake, or by still fiercer instruments of construction and change, the formation, in a single day, of an abyss for the reception of a body of waters sufficient to cover the globe, must have been a work of the most tremendous violence and rapidity. The clearest fact in geology, perhaps the only clear fact in geology, is—that the present dry land was the bed of the ancient ocean. What must be the force which could plunge all our existing continents, with all their mountains, in a day, perhaps in an instant, to a depth of, at least, four miles; perhaps of much more<sup>1</sup>. And we

<sup>1</sup> Dr. Young computes the mean depth of the Atlantic at three miles, and of the Pacific at four, (*Lectures*); and the French

have proof, that this could not have been a mere uniform subsidence. The whole ocean-bed was probably in a state of the most violent disruption in all its parts; for the fractures and positions of our present strata are anterior to the Deluge. Yet none of the countless wonders of the Divine hand in our world are more demonstrative of a provision for the future, than this permitted fury of the elements. In this very convulsion there was the finest forecast for the wants of unborn mankind, not merely of the race about to be formed, but of the generations who were to come into existence only when the Antediluvian generations and their world had passed away together. Nothing is more obvious, than that from this disruption arise the chief capabilities of our earth. To this we owe our wells and rivers, the easy access to the varieties of metals, to all the clays and materials of fertilizing the soil, to coal, marble, gems, and a multitude of products indispensable to human use or enjoyment, which, if buried in concentric layers, must have chiefly lain at depths beyond human labour, but are now, by the general up-breaking and commixture of the strata, brought within the reach of man.

philosophers (*La Place*, &c.) calculate the average depth of the ocean at four miles. Other authorities give it depths even to eleven. It has been asserted, that a less depth than eleven would be unequal to account for the lunar influence on the tides.

We may go further still, and discover even a more minute and direct forecast in some of the most remarkable and important products of the Earth, as in gold, iron, and coal. The purpose of gold seems to have been, expressly, to supply an universal medium of exchange, an use evidently of the first necessity to the intercourse of nations. If gold were a metal of less beauty, greater bulk, or greater abundance, it would be equally unfitted for this purpose. By its possession of the due share of all those qualities, it has, from the earliest ages to this hour, constituted the chief standard of value. But, as its use was to be universal, so is its existence. There is scarcely a region of the earth in which gold is not found. The greater wealth of the Brazilian mines has turned the general eye for a while from the produce of the old continents; but gold is found from the arctic to the equator, and from the equator to the southern limits of life.

Iron is the great instrument of power, as gold is of civilization; and this tamer of the earth, and controuler of man, useful in every region of the globe, is accordingly found in all. But coal exhibits a striking discrepancey. Though an essential of life in the colder temperatures, it would, as a producer of heat, be thrown away on one half of the globe; in consequence, it is seldom found but in the colder regions, and it is found nearly in them



all. A double chain of coal formations appears to circle the world to the north and south of the tropics. Coal is found in a line extending from the British isles through the Netherlands, Germany, and Hungary, to the Euxine, through Tartary, China, and North America ; it is found in New South Wales, and probably waits only for the investigation of the wildernesses stretching to the Straits of Magellan, and of the southern polar islands, to exhibit the same presence of a mineral palpably provided to arm man against the inclemencies of earth and sky.

The “ one place ” into which “ all the waters under the firmament were gathered together ” was now a vast bed of dislocated and disrupted strata, left thenceforth to the regular action of the tides and currents in their various agencies of dissolving, blending, and recombining, for a period of more than two thousand years ; when, the process being complete, and the sea-bed fitted for the support of human life, the ocean was poured back upon the land, and the former bed, elevated to its original level, finally became the world, to be inhabited by the new generations of mankind<sup>1</sup>.

<sup>1</sup> The sterility of the antediluvian world, which, though a special infliction for the first crime, was yet doubtless provided for by the physical constitution of the surface, may probably be explained by the absence of this disruption of the strata. A land, overspread with one uniform layer of soil, must have soon become barren. The general barbarism too, may be, in some degree,

This original violent formation of the great seabed is commemorated in one of the noblest effusions of sacred poetry—"O Lord, my God! Thou art clothed with honour and majesty. Who laidest the *foundations* of the earth, that it should not be removed for ever. Thou coveredst it with the deep, as with a garment: the waters stood above the mountains. At thy rebuke they fled. At the voice of thy thunder they hasted away. They went over the mountains; they went down by the valleys into the place which thou didst find for them. Thou didst set a bound which they should not pass over." (Psalm civ.)<sup>1</sup>.

The land was now left open; and by an additional act of the Divine will, it was instantly covered with the three great classes of vegetable life—the grass, the shrub, and the tree, all marked as equally starting into existence, and their organization as being complete, not simply for imme-

accounted for by the want of the minerals. The discovery of iron is alluded to only at a period but little before the Deluge.

<sup>1</sup> The Jewish commentators expressly refer this detail to the original act of Deity. Amama says—"We perceive that this description regards the face of the earth at *the Creation*." Aben Ezra, in guarding against a probable error, further confirms the opinion: "But some one perhaps will say, that the waters returned at the Deluge. I reply, that we are to understand this passage of the *order* of nature. The Deluge was the exception." The language of the text declaring the original command,—“thus far shalt thou go,” also appears to apply directly to the Creation.

diate support, but for the continuance of their species : the herb “yielding seed after its kind,” and the “tree yielding the fruit” which contained the seed, “after its kind.” The wild and bare globe exhibited a sudden clothing of colour and beauty, vivid, prolific, and perpetual.

Another extraordinary change was now to begin, extending through the Universe—the motion of the heavenly bodies in their orbits.

**THE FOURTH DAY.**—GOD SAID, LET THERE BE LIGHTS IN THE FIRMAMENT OF HEAVEN TO DIVIDE THE DAY FROM THE NIGHT, AND LET THEM BE FOR SIGNS AND FOR SEASONS, AND FOR DAYS AND YEARS. AND LET THEM BE FOR LIGHTS IN THE FIRMAMENT OF THE HEAVEN TO GIVE LIGHT UPON THE EARTH, AND IT WAS SO. - - - AND GOD MADE TWO GREAT LIGHTS, THE GREATER LIGHT TO RULE THE DAY, AND THE LESSER LIGHT TO RULE THE NIGHT; THE STARS ALSO.

The distinction of day and night had been made on the first day. That distinction implied the revolution of the earth on its axis; for, without it, evening and morning could not have existed. But another species of motion was now to be communicated to the planetary system, and, so far as our knowledge extends, to all systems—the movement of the inferior orbs round their suns. On this day the lights of heaven were appointed to distinguish *seasons and years*, as well as days. But

seasons and years altogether result from the revolution of the planets round the central luminary: the seasons depending on the approach to or recess from the sun, combined with the position of the axis, and the year being only the name of the period employed in that circuit. That the Deity could impress the motion round the axis on the first day, and withhold the motion round the sun until the fourth, is as conceivable as that they are totally separate in their direction, and given for palpably distinct purposes. This was the first communication of those influences which, in the want of clearer terms, we call centrifugal and centripetal. Needless perplexity has been produced by the common error of conceiving, that on this day the sun and stars were formed. The text refers, *not* to their creation, but to their uses. The *heavens* were called into being on the first day; an expression destitute of all meaning, if it does not mean the heavenly bodies. Those bodies on the fourth day were invested with new qualities for a new character: they were rendered the measures of time. The sun and moon alternately illumining the earth, were now especially appointed as the dividers of the year and the month—"the stars also." The words *he made*, in our translation, are not warranted by the original. The true meaning is, that the stars were, in their degree, now employed in the same character with the two luminaries peculiarly presiding over night

and day : they were also givers of light, and dividers of seasons<sup>1</sup>. In our vapoury skies, the stars are comparatively obscure ; but in three-fourths of the earth, and eminently in the regions near and between the tropics, their use has been felt from the first ages ; there, they not merely give a light sufficient for night travel, but by their risings and settings, both dependent on the daily motion of the earth, they supply an unerring dial of the night hours ; and, by their place in the heavens, announce the seasons, and even designate periods of those seasons highly important to man. In the east, they are the silent and lovely friends of the

<sup>1</sup> The distinction between the *light* of the heavenly bodies, and the *use* to which it was first applied, on the fourth day, is perfectly marked in the original. In the former instance, the word is, אֹר, simply light ; in the latter, it is מְאָרֵת, light-bearers, depositories of illumination. The Septuagint has φως and φωστῆρες, which bear the same relation. Rosenmuller is decided on this appropriation of the stars to the fourth day, *merely as to their uses* : “ De determinatione astrorum ad certos quosdam usus orbi terrarum præstandos esse sermonem (constat) non de eorum productione.”—p. 61.

That the sun and moon were created on the *first day* is the Hebrew opinion. “ Hebræi dicunt solem et Lunam creatos fuisse primo die. Hebræi solis fuisse (primam) lucem intelligunt, quod sol sit fons et origo lucis. (*Critici Sacri, in Gen. 3.*)

The ingenious conception of Frank (*Chronologia Fundamentalis*) that on the fourth day alone the moon *could* be visible for the first time to the earth, depends on the supposition, that on the first day the moon was directly in a line between the sun and the earth, of which we can have no knowledge.

traveller, the mariner, and the husbandman ; as they are to us, the book of the sublimest science of the philosopher ; and to all, the writing of the finger of God in the skies.

**THE FIFTH DAY.**—Another admirable evidence of the Divine power was now to be given—the connexion of animal life with matter.

*“ And God said, Let the waters bring forth abundantly the moving creature that hath life, and fowl that may fly above the earth in the open firmament of heaven. ”*

*“ And God created great whales, and every living creature that moveth, which the waters brought forth abundantly after their kind, and every winged fowl after his kind : and God saw that it was good. ”*

*“ And God blessed them, saying, Be fruitful, and multiply, and fill the waters in the seas, and let fowl multiply in the earth. And the evening and the morning were the fifth day. ”*

The connexion of animal life with organized body instantly overthrows the whole modern and mechanical system of aggregation. The construction of a living body *cannot* be gradual. The frame must be formed in all its parts at once, before it can exercise the common functions of life. The whale, that, with its fins finished, must wait a hundred or a thousand years for the finishing of its lungs by the “ course of nature ;” must

wait for ever. The infant, born with half a brain and half a heart, must die before he could think or move. The living machine may increase in size, strength, or faculty, but it must be set in action complete, or not at all. And this completeness, in the first instance, was Creation, the result of a primary and direct volition of the Deity.

THE SIXTH DAY.—A higher rank of existence was now to follow, in the tribes of terrestrial animals.

*“And God said, let the earth bring forth the living creature after his kind; cattle, and creeping thing, and beast of the earth after his kind: and it was so.”*

The earth thus filled with plants, and with living forms and embodied minds, was next to witness the perfection of living form united to the highest order of earthly mind. Man was to be created, the sovereign of earth, its products, and its animals.

*“And God said, let us make man in our image, after our likeness: and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth. So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them.”*

The consultation of God, if we may so speak, on the formation of man, "Let us make man;" the *breathing* of a soul, the נשמת חיים into his frame, which was done in his instance alone; his declared production by the hand of God, while all the inferior animals were brought forth by the earth and waters; his limitation to a single species, and of that species but two individuals, while the other living creatures were brought forth in multitude and variety, "abundantly after their kinds;" establish a strong physical distinction between the human race and all the other inhabitants of the globe.

His formation in the "image of God" establishes a distinction of a higher kind. The "image" has been variously argued to imply form, intellect, and immortality. It probably means none of the three. It cannot be form, for what has form to do with the Divine mind? The form of the Redeemer was borrowed from human nature. It cannot be intellect, for man shares intellect with the lower animals; nor immortality, for man, before the fall, was not essentially immortal. It is clearly some power or property shut up from all lower existence. The only known attribute of this order is moral perception. Brutes intellectually differ from man less in kind than in degree. They partially reason and remember, they love, hate, desire, and fear. But who has ever discovered a moral sense among the inferior races? Who talks



of the *sin* or *virtue* of a brute? Duty, merit, right and wrong, are words inapplicable to all below man: yet on those words is founded incomparably the largest share of the motives, obligations, and stimulants to effort among mankind. They are the names of the great provinces of human action. But Revelation decides the question at once. The express language of Christianity is, that the renewal of holiness in the human heart is—the renewal of the Divine image<sup>1</sup>. “Put on the new man, which is renewed in knowledge, after the *image of Him that created him*<sup>2</sup>.” Holiness and the Divine image are identical; “Be renewed,” again says the Apostle, “in the spirit of your mind, and

<sup>1</sup> Even in the succinct narrative of Genesis there is a palpable distinction. The passage in which the formation “in the image of God” is declared, is fully separated from that which states his physical formation. In the former the language is, “Let us make man in our image, after our likeness, and let him have dominion” over all that the earth produces; thus qualifying him to exercise every duty that government implies,—direction, protection, provision, &c. as much as enjoyment for his own use, over the world: a moral exercise, as well as a physical possession. The *image* is also expressly extended to both sexes. (Gen. i. 26. 27.) But in the subsequent chapter the process of man’s formation is described, without any mention of his authority: “And the Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground; and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul;” the expression *living soul*, נֶפֶשׁ, is equally applied to brutes, (Gen. i. 30.) In the Septuagint it is ψυχη ζων.

<sup>2</sup> Colos. iii. 10.

put on the new man which is *created after God*, in righteousness and true holiness<sup>1</sup>." The act of being created anew after God (or after the pattern of the Divine perfection) is here designated the adoption of sanctity. But the power of this adoption itself depends upon an exclusive faculty—conscience ; of all the functions of the spirit of man, 'the most sensitive, sleepless, and universal ; of all his faculties, that which seems the most keenly connected with the impressions of higher worlds ; the perpetual check on the passions and frailties of our nature, the instant warning of crime in its birth, the vivid avenger of crime in its completion, the irresistible retributor of evil for evil to the pillow of the oppressor, the cheerer of the chain and the scaffold to the sufferer in the righteous cause, the great earthly anticipator of the Divine tribunal ; an accuser seldom capable of being totally silenced, even in the loudest triumphs of human guilt, but, in the hour of misfortune, or of natural decay, often returning with terrible infliction, awakening the memory to a sense of evil unmatched by the rack and the scourge, and breaking up life in an agony of the whole bodily and mental frame of man.

THE SEVENTH DAY.—The work of creation was now complete ; and it was to be crowned by an act exclusively addressed to man, and to him

<sup>1</sup> Ephes. iv. 24.

in the highest capacity of his nature<sup>1</sup>—The consecration of the Sabbath, a great moral observance, by which man, in every period of his life, and every age of the world, was to be constantly recalled to the acknowledgment that he and all things round him were the creatures of the Divine will. “Thus,” concludes the sacred historian, “the heavens and the earth were finished, and all the host of them.”

<sup>1</sup> The Sabbath also had reference to the inferior animals, but only to those classes whose natural liberty is impaired, for the benefit of man; and, of course, to those only as a means of physical relaxation.

## CHAPTER III.

### CREATION.

THE primary question, *Why* the material universe was created ; belongs to the councils of Heaven. But we know that it could not have been essential to the happiness or the glory of the Supreme Lord ; for the perfection of His nature, must be independent of all things external—nor to the occupation of his angels, for the Lord of infinite wisdom must be enabled to command countless resources for the activity of the highest of his creatures. Yet, from the occasional and remote intimations in Scripture of the revolt of evil spirits, we may perhaps form some conjecture of the Divine design. It is evidently among the first principles of the Providential Government, to show the course of beneficence uncontrolled, to force good out of evil, and to transmute even the utmost violence and malignity of its opponents into the final instruments of its supremacy and mercy. It may thus have been among the purposes of the creation, to give an evidence to the angels

who kept their first estate, that no hostile attempt *could* have any other issue than that of aggrandizing the glory of the Deity. Even the fall of man and his offspring, on this principle, might be converted into the means of a great moral and physical triumph. If the exalted intellects that belong to the angelic tribes have any thing in common with the human understanding, no more impressive lesson could be administered for their continuance in subordination and virtue, than the sight of the leading spirit of evil, and his angels, suffered to expatiate through a new and vast scene of existence, yet, by that sufferance, only the more condignly baffled : their more extended revolt only the more directly doing the work of the Divine benevolence, in trying and purifying spirits for immortality ; and finally, the outrage and insult, which aimed at universal ruin, only opening the way for the mightiest act of mercy, perhaps, conceivable by created intelligence, the Atonement,—the sacred completion of the contest between good and evil, bringing back the Redeemer to his throne, at the head of the redeemed, gathered from every orb of the universe, concentrating on his brow new titles to glory, and filling the heaven and the heaven of heavens with his praise.

On this principle, too, that the universe comprehended in its purposes a lesson to the higher orders of being, we may answer the next ques-

tion, Why Creation was successive? To Omnipotence, the production of an universe must have been as easily the work of a moment, as of ages. But, as to man, the Divine skill in the Creation is among the most striking materials of knowledge, and equally among the most resistless evidences of the Divine goodness, power, and supremacy : so may it be to the spirits round the throne.

It is not to be objected, that the phenomena which exhibit the highest wonders to the narrow faculties of man, may be simple to the sagacity of the spiritual world ; as in human science, the more advanced acquirement looks down upon the past. This objection does not hold in the works of Deity. There, every advance only accumulates the wonder. The more penetrating the science, the more perpetually it is surprised and delighted ; the more vigorously furnished the intellect, the more it is flooded with evidences of exhaustless skill and power, every ascending step only opening a broader horizon, every new mastery of nature the pledge of another and a nobler possession, a new vestibule to a still more capacious and magnificent shrine of knowledge.

That the spirits of heaven study the moral frame of the universe ; that their knowledge is *gradual* ; and even that there are portions and parts of its government expressly withheld from them for the time, are direct declarations of Scripture. We have no stronger reason to doubt,

that they find objects of their contemplation in the frame of those “heavens which declare the glory of God ;” than that they watch the ways of Providence among men, or minister to the Church, or “earnestly desire to look into” the mysteries of Redemption. It is evident, that the successive days of the Creation were not for the human eye. Nor were the successive announcements of the leading works of those days for the human ear. Nor could the words, “Let there be light,” “Let there be a firmament,” “Let the air and ocean bring forth life,” have been uttered as commands perceptible by brute matter ; for perception implies mind. Nor can we conceive them as disclosures of the counsels of the Deity *to himself*. On what grounds, then, are they to be accounted for ; but as proclamations to the surrounding tribes of intellect, summonses to investigate each new operation of the Divine will ? An instantaneous universe might have overwhelmed all faculties but intuition ; an universe formed in six days was a train of consecutive and connected discoveries, opened at intervals adapted to the perception of created beings. Those are, of course, offered merely as probable reasons for acts which must always remain objects of imperfect knowledge. But, if the strong probability be the actual truth, we can scarcely conceive a loftier occasion of impressing a sense of the attributes of the Universal Lord on the

minds of his creatures. If the “ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands,” the incalculable multitudes of the spiritual world, then surrounded the descending Deity, as they shall yet surround him when he comes to judgment; every successive act must have been the source of an influx of ideas of the most novel, splendid, and comprehensive nature. In the result of the first command, the general formation of the heavens and earth, they saw a phenomenon of which spirits may have had no more previous conception, than man has of the nature of spirit: solid and extended substance, regions of space, all but infinite, filled, at the instant, with myriads of worlds<sup>1</sup>. Intuition may belong to Deity alone. But, in the ascending ranks of spiritual intellect,

<sup>1</sup> The magnitude even of our planet, diminutive as it is, compared with the great external orbs, is overwhelming. The surface of the earth alone contains 197,552,160 square miles, of which about three-fourths, or 148,000,000, are now covered with ocean.

Its interior, beyond the few hundred fathoms that we have pierced in looking for minerals, is placed out of the reach of man; until some new means shall be discovered of counteracting the inflammable vapours, and the waters, which form its barrier. But the contents of those depths are important, by their influence, though we should never discover their materials. Their gravitation steadies all things on the surface. If they were suddenly turned into air, nothing could be stable on the circumference for a moment. All would be loosened, fly off, or be overthrown.



there must be faculties capable of penetrating into the mysteries of nature, with a degree of force and swiftness equivalent to perpetual, unretarded, and all but unlimited, knowledge. What a fount of rational wonder must have been opened, even in the first formation of our single globe, to faculties which could enter directly into the secrets of its structure ! What material for noble curiosity, in the treasures already stored in that rude and lifeless mass, its beds of minerals, its gems, its stratification, its preparatives for human existence, its springs, and soils, its irresistible vapours, its fluids, its fires ? But we have also the strongest analogy for the belief that every orb of the universe is prepared for the support of life, and furnished with exuberant instances of the Divine wisdom and benevolence. What must have been the effect of their *millions* starting thus into existence before the angelic eye !

Writers on those subjects have too hastily assumed, that the work of the six days was limited to the earth. But the language of the historian is decisive. Commencing with the declaration, that in the beginning God created the heavens and the earth, and stating, that after this primary operation, the earth was still empty of all production, dark and void, he thenceforth limits himself to the detail of production in that part of the universe with which man was most concerned ; but he concludes with words as comprehensive as

those with which he began: "Thus the *heavens* and *the earth* were *finished*, and all the *host* of them;"<sup>1</sup> not merely the general frame, but the individual orbs; "*finished*,"—applied *to all*, in the same sense in which we *know* that it was applied to Earth; furnished with life and the means of life. The resting on the seventh day is as directly referred to the Divine operation in the orbs of heaven as in the earth. "And God blessed the seventh day, and sanctified it, because in it he had rested from *all his work* which God had created and made. Those are the *generations* of the *heavens* and the earth, when they were created, in the day that the Lord made the earth and the heavens<sup>2</sup>." We thus have no ground whatever for conceiving from this, or any other, part of Scripture, that any distinction existed between the act of Deity in the heavenly bodies and in our globe; that those higher orbs were either left in the formless and void state of the first day, while our planet was replenished; or that they were fitted and furnished by an instantaneous energy, while Earth was subjected to a process of gradual completion.

The progressive formation of the universe, thus viewed, must have assumed an aspect totally superior to any impression now conceivable by the human mind; an aspect suitable to the vivid

<sup>1</sup> Gen. ii. 1.

<sup>2</sup> Gen. ii. 2.

intellect, the previous knowledge, the vigour of inquiry, and the susceptibility of exalted wonder, delight, and adoration, belonging to the spirits round the throne. With what feelings must not such spectators have seen the creation of that most splendid of all fluids,—Light !

The faculties by which spirits *perceive*, are beyond even the thought of beings, who, like us, must owe all their ideas to organization. But darkness relates only to body, and no depth of darkness could have prohibited to spirits the most perfect insight into the universal frame. Still, if they possess any conceptions in common with man, the creation of Light must have been an object of astonishment and transport even to their simple sense of beauty. Its sudden burst of illumination over an universe ; its strong embodiments in the suns and centres of the systems ; its softer radiance in their satellites ; its gem-like flashings and colourings in the infinite changes of earth and heaven wrought by the touch of this fine emanation ; must have afforded a spectacle of the loveliest order. But, to their sense of science the spectacle must have been still more admirable. It is well known, that human science finds the subject of some of its finest speculations in this fluid. Its measureless activity ; the infinite minuteness of its parts<sup>1</sup> ; its singular and bril-

<sup>1</sup> Light seems to be absolutely without any weight whatever. It defies, certainly, all human standard. “ No particle of light

liant composition ; its mysterious connexion with the beauty, and perhaps the being, of vegetable existence ; its powers of chemical change ; the avenues which it opens into the structure of things ; its agency in crystallization, in magnetism, in heat, in electricity, in the human frame ; its infinite vibrations, its power of penetrating the densest bodies ; all may form the unexhausted study of ages to come. But an additional field, closed to man, was open to higher natures, in its application to the universe ; in the knowledge of those numberless and noble expedients which they might be empowered to trace, for its diffusion through regions, to which all that spreads before the human eye may be as nothing ; in the atmospheres, rings, moons, nebulæ, those vast mirrors and reservoirs of illumination, which, varied and magnificent as they are in our system, probably possess a thousand times the grandeur and diversity in the countless systems, equally above our vision and our knowledge <sup>1</sup>.

can weigh the *millionth millionth* part of a grain," is the asser-tion of one of our philosophers. Yet what is this estimate but a more formal declaration, that we have no power of attaching the idea of weight to its existence.

<sup>1</sup> The light of Sirius has been calculated at fourteen suns. (*Wollaston.*) Yet this, perhaps the nearest fixed star, and chiefly conspicuous on that account, may bear no proportion to the more remote centres of light in the universe. If the solar system be but in the relation of a planet with its satellites to a still vaster system, as has been strongly urged ; what must be

But the wonders of the first day were not yet complete. An influence, teeming with the most powerful effects, and which, to this hour, fills Science with its deepest problems, and the world with activity, usefulness, and enjoyment—MOTION, almost the soul of matter, was to be created. If to spirits matter were a new conception; motion, which altogether depends upon matter, must have been equally new. With what feelings, then, must they have seen the whole immensity of space, filled and vivified at a word with this new influence, propagating itself through bodies of the magnitude of the planets, at rates of revolution round their axes of from 1000 to 30,000 miles an hour; or through suns as large as the mass of their systems. But even those feelings might be weak to the scientific astonishment excited by the fine adaptations to this great impulse exhibited in the variety of axes, of sphericities, of densities, the exquisite and unfailing balance of forces and forms exhibited on a scale as broad as the creation! “Thus the evening and the morning were the first day.”

the magnitude and lustre of the sun of that system! The late controversy on the parallax of this beautiful star, has left the subject as much in doubt as ever. Its distance is probably immeasurable by any human means; but it is calculated that it cannot be less than half a million of semi-diameters of the earth's orbit.

The Second Day threw open a totally distinct province of nature—the world of meteors—the atmosphere. The earth lay in light, but still covered with the ocean. At the Divine Word, a vast mass of the waters was suddenly borne up from the abyss, changing its solid bulk into the lightness and beauty of clouds<sup>1</sup>. A new element was thus developed, less brilliant than light, yet still more essential, at least to human existence, and not less abounding in diversity and value of powers. The discovery of a few of its principles is still ranked among the chief trophies of human research. Yet what boundless room for discovery must have been given in a fluid which takes a share in every process of nature; possessing capacities, apparently of the most opposite kinds: of sustaining life and of its instant extinction;

<sup>1</sup> The height of the atmosphere is still a question. It has been variously calculated at little more than four times the height of the clouds, or about eight miles; at forty-five, from barometrical pressure; at a hundred, or at still greater heights, from the perpetual existence of light in the zenith: for the deepest midnight is not totally dark except when the sky is covered with clouds. But what limit can be placed to so expansible a fluid? Meteors have been seen burning at the height of a thousand miles. It may be justly asked, Could they burn without air? The pressure of the atmosphere is a new wonder. It is essential to existence; yet it seems made to destroy all existence: fourteen tons on a man! 5000 millions of millions of tons on the globe!

of expansion, and condensation, nearly unlimited ; of the most refreshing softness, and of force absolutely irresistible ;—Air, the great conveyancer of scents and sounds, the great agent of combustion, of salubrity, of vegetation ; universally felt, yet invisible ; a double principle of destruction, a poison and a flame, combined into a principle of life. Yet those were scarcely more than the passive powers of this marvellous element. A new scene of delight must have been reserved in the displays of its visible action.

By what direct process the firmament was formed, is not declared. But a process so similar in its effects constantly occurs, that we may be entitled to think the magnitude of the original operation the chief difference. With us, the solution and ascent of water in the air is, in general, unobserved ; yet the evaporation of a summer's noon, or even of a burst of sunshine, may produce the thunder-storm. If an operation of such comparative slowness and limited extent can produce a convulsion of the elements, what may not have been the result of an evaporation, acting at once over the whole surface of the globe, dividing ocean from ocean, and completing the whole process in a day. All that man has ever seen of elemental convulsion, must be calminess to the universal hurricane. But, to beings superior to the terrors that distract the human heart and eye, there might be only successive impressions of delight and grandeur in the

successive aspects of this tremendous agency. From the commencement to the close ; from the first covering of the concave with the volumes of vapour, rushing upwards like smokes from a conflagration ; from the first awaking of electricity, the first blaze of the lightning, the first roll of the thunder, the first burst of the hail, the rain, the snow ; to the consummate tempest, the whirlwind rending its way through the floating mountains and continents of cloud above ; and the water-spout ploughing the world of waters below ; all was new, powerful, and sublime. Even the subsidence of the storm, might give but a new succession of images, never till then conceived ;—in the change from grandeur to beauty, the clearing of the heavens, the dying away of the thunder, the stillness and softness of the air, the superb shapes and colourings of the sunset clouds, the infinite lights and shadows of the subsiding ocean ; till came the yet more impressive change, from the loveliness of earth and air to the magnificent serenity of the skies, a new scene of splendours opening with the close of day ; the twilight glittering with the shooting star ; the summer lightning ; the prismatic lustres and spiritual swiftness of the aurora ; till they, too, passed away, and all was left to the “ living sapphires,” the calm majesty of the host of heaven.

The Third Day disclosed a new mystery of



wisdom, totally distinct from all the past. On the pouring of the waters into the great reservoir, broken for them at the instant, into the surface of the globe—an operation of tremendous violence and extent—the uncovered land exhibited a work of Deity, which, as it could not have existed before the formation of matter, might have never before entered into the thoughts of any created mind: the fixing of a living principle in a material form. Matter was now seen suddenly assuming innumerable shapes, animated by a new mover of existence. The earth was covered with the three great tribes of the grasses, the herbs, and the trees: the whole opulence of the vegetable kingdom. Familiarity satiates the ignorant, but has no power to impair the impressions of the philosopher: and to the last hour of the world, the study of this great region of nature will probably fill him with new interest, and be the source of new knowledge. He sees in vegetation a mechanism of the most curious and delicate contrivance, embracing, in its forms, the widest scale of magnitude of any product of the earth, from the gigantic trees of the Asiatic<sup>1</sup>, African,

<sup>1</sup> The Banian tree has been a topic since our earliest knowledge of India. Arrian, on the authority of Nearchus, describes one as covering *five acres*. The great Cubbeer Burr, on the banks of the Nerbudda, is an actual grove, with upwards of 300

and American forest, down to the fungi and microscopic mosses of the pole; and exhibiting in its processes a circle of the most striking and admirable change; in the succession of the seed, the bloom, and the fruit reproducing the seed, a perpetual precaution against loss or decay, the storehouse of an existence capable of spreading over an unlimited extent, and through an unlimited duration, a vegetable immortality. Still, the more refined and rapid apprehension of superior beings might receive the degree of delight connected with the greater fulness and rapidity of this knowledge. What a banquet for the inquiry of such intellects might not be offered in those secrets of sensation and self-sustenance, which we so tardily, and, at best, so partially discover; in the efficacy of those countless balms and specifics, which probably contain a peculiar medicine for every disease of man; in the anatomy of plants, in their profound chemistry, their renewal of the atmosphere, their renewal of the fertility of the soil, or even in the view of the mere multitude of products elaborated from the simple elements of earth and water by those exquisite alembics, in the dyes, varnishes, gums,

large stems, and 3,000 small ones. The *Adansonia* has been found from fifty to sixty feet in girth, with branches of twenty and thirty. The age of trees is equally memorable. There are yew trees in England known to be a thousand years old.

essences, oils, sugars, spices, wines, so incomparably adapted to the wants and enjoyments of every locality of the globe<sup>1</sup>.

But a new feature of a still finer order was to be added to this profusion—beauty of form ; and that in so remarkable a degree, in one of the great races of the vegetable kingdom—the whole vast family of flowers—as apparently to constitute the chief object of its creation. The measureless variety<sup>2</sup>, yet consummate elegance, of the forms

<sup>1</sup> Some of the leading names of Greek philosophy conceived plants to be actual animals ; but the chief part of ancient science was trifling, except where it was traditional.

Among the most remarkable qualities of plants is their power of increase ; a power of which we have hitherto comparatively taken but little advantage. The common increase of wheat, under our careless cultivation, is five or six fold ; but its *capacity* of production is nearly without limit. A single grain has produced from five to six thousand ; and, by repeated divisions, upwards of half a million. To what extent a superior cultivation may yet urge this power, is incalculable. All fruits are capable of extraordinary improvement, for all have been improved to their present state from products scarcely fit for the use of man.

<sup>2</sup> The species of plants already known are nearly 100,000 ; and when we consider how vast a portion of the earth is still comparatively unexplored, including the wildernesses of North and South America, and peculiarly Africa, the great country of vegetation, whose central table land has scarcely been touched by an European foot, we may not have discovered half the actual number of the land. But a new world of vegetation lies at the bottom of the ocean, which man can never hope fully to investigate : yet in which nature sports in the wildest pro-

of plants ; the fine harmony preserved between the stem, the branch, the leaf, and the bloom ; their hues, from the broadest effulgence of colouring, down to the most retiring and tender shades ; the exquisite moulding and painting of the flower-cup, which often seems as if it had been but just touched by the most studied pencil of living taste ; even their movements, as they bend and recover before the wind, all are direct appeals to the native sense of beauty. In their fragrance, too, lies only another appeal to another sense of beauty, perhaps more exclusive and delicate than that of the eye. Every man of perceptions yet unvitiated, knows that plants have thus the capacity of reaching the mind, and that the breath of the garden and the field can infuse into the heart something of a pure tranquillity, not far from virtue. Probably there are few, unless the whole frame of their minds has been utterly torn and wrecked by vice or despair, who, in their evening walk, have not felt this power of quieting the irritations of the day ; have not unconsciously divested their bosoms of some part of the ambitious pinings and causeless hostilities that constitute the fever of the world ; and learned, even from such slight teachers as the lilies of the field, lessons of the wisdom and goodwill of that mighty

fusion, from the oceanic algæ, fifteen hundred feet long, to the most minute and fragile mosses.

Being, who makes all nature music to the ear, and beauty to the eye !

The work of the Fourth Day was a great operation on the whole frame of things. On this day, the heavenly bodies, already rolling on their axes, were to be impressed with the new form of motion which rolls them round the centres of their systems. The globe had already been divided into land and ocean ; the land was already clothed with vegetation ; the air was formed, tempering the heat and cold of the soil, receiving the vapours, and returning them, softened and purified, into its bosom. To the Earth, thus prepared for the course by which it administers to the subsistence and pleasures of man, in this fitting moment, *the seasons*, by which this course was to be thenceforth sustained, were determined. Of all the acts of the Divine hand, next to the first summoning of the universe into existence, this was the most stupendous. Imagination totally sinks before the attempt to conceive the terrific sublimity of this display, even within the boundaries of the solar system, seen in its true velocities and magnitudes—twenty-nine orbs, from 2000 to 80,000 miles in diameter, suddenly shooting forth into space, with a speed of from 20,000 to 100,000 miles an hour ; and even those velocities slow to the flight of a new host, the flame-bearers of the system, the five hundred, or the five thousand

comets, sweeping columns of fire, from fifty to a hundred millions of miles long, through the heavens ; crossing and traversing the planetary paths in every form of orbit, plunging on them straight downward, sweeping side by side, cutting through them at every conceivable inclination ; in all threatening them with ruin, yet darting through this infinite intricacy with a smoothness and safety which have never been impaired during six thousand years<sup>1</sup>.

Yet what is our system compared with the universe ! The whole creation is in movement : the higher the telescope penetrates, the more clearly it discovers, that all its orbs alike are speeding through space ; that suns and their systems are rolling round orbits of indescribable magnitude, the satellites of suns and systems vaster still, each sweeping a broader inroad into the kingdom of vacancy, all guided by one law, all sustained, animated, and governed by one transcendant will. And this was but the work of a word, the fabric of

<sup>1</sup> Saturn's motion is 22,000 miles an hour, Mercury's 105,000 ! The comets of our system have been calculated at seven hundred, but the actual number is probably much more. The orbits of nearly a hundred have been *ascertained*. The velocity of the comet of 1680 in its perihelion, was calculated at 880,000 miles an hour. The tails of some have extended a hundred millions of miles. On Herschel's computation, the brilliant comet of 1811 had a train one hundred millions of miles long and fifteen millions broad : the whole nebulous diameter of the head was nearly 127,000 miles.

things to pass away, but “the hiding of His power !”

But, in all instances of the Divine agency in nature, the finer contemplation is their science. The characteristics which so powerfully strike the senses, are comparatively lost in the measureless field, which their construction opens to the understanding. The laws by which the motions of our system are regulated, their exact and un-deviating proportions, their periodic provisions against excess of error, form the true sublime. Yet we may be still but in the outskirts of this knowledge. The investigations of those few years have led us to the gates of a new empire of celestial discovery. A slight change in the telescope, or some of those sudden sparks of illumination which the world calls accident, but which should more fitly be named direct interpositions of Providence to stimulate and guide the progress of man, may soon advance us further still, and open, not simply the view, but the constitution, of the new host of heaven—The Binary and clustered stars, with their gigantic revolutions of thousands of years; the regions of the Nebulæ; those still more prodigious globes of constellations, of which we know nothing, but that they contain millions; those vast insulated stars, pre-eminent by their magnitude and the intense beauty of their golden, purple, emerald, and crimson splendours, perhaps offering new delight

to new powers of vision in other worlds, and showing the universe to their inhabitants in shapes and lustres more magnificent than are conceivable by human eyes; glorious, even as, “one star excelleth another star in glory<sup>1</sup>.”

The work of the Fifth Day was a demonstration of the Divine hand of a totally distinct order. Animal life still baffles all inquiry. The sources of its excitability; of its resistance to the dissolution of organized matter; of its increased tenacity in the lower grades of existence, and its fearful facility of extinction in man; of its periodical renewals of activity in peculiar classes, and its sustentation under the torpor of others, for hundreds or thousands of years; its influence on the intellect; its singular force in the muscular system, its equally singular susceptibility in the nervous; its incessant galvanic and chemical influences; are all problems, still almost hopelessly obscure. Even so simple a question as its fount and residence in man and the inferior animals, whether the brain, the spine, the heart, the nerves; whether, taking Scripture literally, the

<sup>1</sup> Struve has already discovered upwards of 3000 double stars.

The colours of the more conspicuous stars are not to be referred to juxta-position, or to the defects of the telescope. They are in general real colours, and often of the most striking and various vividness.



blood ; or circumfused through all ; has been asked since the beginning of time, and probably will be asked, without an answer, till its close. .

On this day, in replenishing air and ocean, two great divisions of animal life were created, exhibiting properties strikingly similar, yet adapted to purposes of extreme diversity ; one of those tribes formed to take possession of the lightest of the elements, yet to sustain itself there only by a perpetual effort ; to feed on the flowers, fruits, and seeds of the land, to sport in the sunshine, to enjoy earth and air alike, and to fill both with harmony ; the other destined to force its way through an element of nine hundred times the density of the air, and live where nearly all other animal life perishes ; floating without an effort, possessing means of movement of singular rapidity and nearly inexhaustible continuance, and though imbibing air, and seeking and enjoying light, yet inflexibly bound to its dark and heavy element.

The chief similitude of the two tribes existed in their both possessing, in a degree beyond all creatures else, the migratory propensity, and that consequent power of self-direction through the wildernesses of air and ocean, which alike surpasses the senses and the comprehension of man<sup>1</sup>.

<sup>1</sup> Birds and fish equal each other, and surpass all besides, in the length of their migrations. The swallow flies from England to Africa ; fish frequently migrate four or five thousand miles. But

At the rise of the fifth morning, the ocean lay a blank, covering a wide space of the globe. The air, lighted and coloured by the sun, was seen a blue and lovely sphere, but a lifeless one, encompassing the world. At the Almighty word, both were suddenly filled with animated beings. The ocean was tenanted with incalculable multitudes, from the most delicate minuteness to the most enormous magnitude, from dwellers on the surface, and almost in the sunshine, to the inhabitants of depths that never see the day; from shapes of singular

all the inferior animals possess the guiding faculty in a certain degree, for many are under the necessity of migration for various purposes; and all, in a state of nature, are frequently compelled to travel considerable distances for food. The American salt-licks were sometimes at the distance of fifteen hundred miles of swamp and forest from the grazing ground of the deer and buffaloes. The paths made by those animals in their yearly passages, were the original highways of the Indians. The Indian sagacity in marching through the forest, is proverbial; yet it is merely the sagacity of attending to natural marks or indications of previous travel. But no trace is discoverable in man of that faculty by which the herring descends from the Arctic circle, to make its way annually into the harbours of Europe, or the salmon returns from the ocean, year by year, to deposit its young in the self-same river; or, by which the swallow springs from the roof of the English cottage into the fields of air, sweeps boldly across the ocean to Africa, and returns at the due season, almost at the due hour. The ganglions in the nostrils of the dog and other animals living by the chase, have been conjectured to have some connexion with this faculty; but its effects are still inexplicable by any known organ of animal nature.

lightness and beauty, dyed with every tinge of the rainbow, to monsters of the deep, fierce and powerful, made for darkness and the storm ; but all in full activity, all one scene of impulse and enjoyment, darting, diving, sporting, chasing their food, or steering their way in columns of millions through the wildernesses of the deep, from climate to climate ; and all exhibiting the most varied and perfect fitness in their organs, in the expedients for the protection of those organs from the action of the surrounding element, in their means of motion, of provision, the preservation of their offspring, the simple, but unfailing mechanism, by which they ascend and descend through the varying weights of the ocean, and the exquisite proportion sustained between its gravity and the magnitude of each species, a proportion which seems to require a new formula, not only in every species, but in every individual, and even in every stage of the growth of the individual.

The peopling of the air, if we are to judge from the impressions of mortal eyes, might be a still more delightful spectacle. Of all the races of Creation, the birds seem to be the most formed for a life of enjoyment, and the most expressly designed to display the beauty that may invest animal nature. On this day, their millions<sup>1</sup>, dipt

<sup>1</sup> An additional similitude of the tribes of air and ocean is their extraordinary power of production. The multitude of both

in every hue of earth and cloud, and furnished with powers to enjoy the whole range of both, were sent forth to diversify the young world with their beauty and their song. But in the construction of those two great tribes, a new treasure of knowledge was opened. The vegetable kingdom had already displayed brilliant secrets of organization, but the provision for the principle of animal life introduced an organization totally new, varied beyond human count, and possessing a combination of the finest mechanism which we can comprehend, with influences of which we know nothing but the name. For the first time, was seen that system of incomparable contrivance which constitutes the animal fabric—brain, nerve, organs of voice, of respiration, of the senses, the still insolveable problem of muscular action, the circulation of that astonishing compound—the blood, which, perpetually wasting and perpetually renewed, the great instrument, if not the actual vehicle of life, pervading the ten thousand times ten thousand veins and vessels of the frame, pours and shoots, and glows and stimulates, alike in labour and rest, day and night, for

which migrate annually from breeding places where they are undisturbed baffles all calculation. Two hundred millions of pilchards have been supposed to be at one time in one of the Cornish bays; the annual migration of herrings from the north is by columns, which darken the sea for leagues. Yet the number of species differ widely. The fish are about 900, the birds already ascertained are nearly 6000.

a hundred years together, without an effort of the body or the mind<sup>1</sup>.

The sixth and last day of creation exhibited the same progressive superiority, in a general application of the Divine powers, still more extensive in their use, and higher in their object, again followed by the development of a totally new principle. The air and ocean had each received its dwellers. The land was now to receive four great classes of animal life at once; three of those, the beast of the field, the reptile, and the insect, possessing the various organization fitted for their purposes of existence, but distinguished from the classes of the air and the waters, by the keener intelligence demanded by their difference of position. The Creator does nothing in vain. The fish and the fowl had been placed in elements which gave them a remarkable degree of security<sup>2</sup>: not one in

<sup>1</sup> The veins in man, and in all the chief classes of animal life, are much more numerous than we can conceive from the inspection of anatomical plates. Like the nerves, they are beyond all calculation. The point of a gnat's proboscis, almost too fine for the microscope, cannot strike into any part of the human frame, without producing pain and drawing blood; in other words, without finding both a nerve and a *vein*.

<sup>2</sup> It is computed that the product of *two* codfish (seven millions) would supply the whole usual consumption of mankind. The general multiplication of fish is prodigious; the codfish three millions and a half, the flounder a million and a half, the mackerel half a million, &c. Much of this may be provided for

myriads of either is to be reached by the injury of the seasons, by the sterility of the soil, or by the pursuit of the great destroyer, man. They take wing to the clouds, they plunge into the abyss. Instinct is therefore their chief guide. But the tribes of earth, down to the lowest insect, are placed in a perpetual state of exposure. Inflexible instinct would leave them at the mercy of their perpetual pursuers ; they are therefore provided with flexible reason. Air, soil, sun, human skill, every change of season, strongly affects their existence. The sagacity of the animals of the forest, in securing their prey, sheltering their lair, evading pursuit, and protecting their young, is therefore rapid and vigilant. But in this instance, as in all, rapidity and amplitude of view, and the full comprehension of properties and purposes, must give a sense of delight incommunicable by the tardy progress of man. We know with what pleased and eager diligence the naturalist investigates every peculiarity of a new species ; but what must be the increase of that interest, if he were to be shown the hills and plains of a continent suddenly crowded

the support of the other tribes of the deep ; but it points to a boundless provision laid up for the future extent of population. The wood-pigeons of America migrate in columns several miles broad, and several days' journey long. A few are killed, but the infinite multitude wing their way beyond the reach of man. One of those columns has been computed at two thousand millions !

with myriads of animals, all unknown before, and of every rank of configuration, force, use, and beauty; from the mass of the elephant, and the muscular vigour and fierce activity of the lion and the tiger, to the flexible grace of the antelope, and the silvery whiteness and sleekness of the ermine; or what infinite and delighted speculation would not be expanded for him, even in the single class of the insect world<sup>1</sup>? It is remarkable, and might almost be taken as a tacit rebuke to human vanity, that in a part of the Creation least of all applicable to human uses, or subject to human control, Nature should have been most elaborate, lavish, and fantastic. All her contrivances in the higher animals are absolutely penurious to the measureless variety with which she has supplied the insect races;—to the talons, spikes, saws, blades, screws, pincers, wheels, fangs, and spears, with which she has armed them—to their instruments of motion, the multitudinous feet, springs, spirals, circles of ribs, fins, webs, wings—to their brilliancy of covering, the plate and ring

<sup>1</sup> The insect species are, beyond all proportion, the most numerous. Every naturalist discovers some addition to their numbers. Those hitherto discovered are supposed to amount to nearly 400,000; yet probably not above two-thirds of the existing species are yet known. The interior of Southern America, Central Africa, Central India, Tartary, China, the islands of the Chinese Archipelago, have yet to be examined in detail. The insects of Britain alone are little short of 10,000.

armour, mail of every hue of metal and gem ; the robes of richer texture than silk and velvet, studded with sparks of the topaz and the diamond—to their phosphoric lustre, arrowy power of wing, and extraordinary brightness and extent of vision—to their double and triple states of being ; changes so striking and so beautiful, that, in all ages, they have been assumed as the emblem of the change from earth to immortality<sup>1</sup>.

<sup>1</sup> The Scarabæus is a well-known Egyptian emblem ; but the butterfly tribe have been the chief subject of this similitude with the more elegant Greeks. Psyche habitually bears a butterfly on her forehead. From a caterpillar, a remarkably slow insect, feeding on the coarser vegetables, gradually growing torpid, and enclosing itself in a case, where it dies ; the butterfly suddenly emerges from its mummy chest, or self-constructed tomb, with a total change of being, with new propensities, powers, enjoyments, and scenes of enjoyment. The creeping feet, the deformed and rapacious mouth, the minute eyes, are all gone. It is now a creature, all whose forms and movements are beauty : it has a delicate curled tube for sucking the honey, on which alone it now lives ; antennæ, of exquisite and probably delighted sensibility of touch ; two eyes, vast in proportion to its form, or rather two casements of many thousand lenses, which must give it the range of the whole horizon ; and is borne on wings of remarkable force, size, and proverbial richness of colouring, on which it sweeps in perpetual flight, spending its life among scents and blossoms.

In opposition to views like those, of the original filling of the earth with animal existence, it has been argued that but a pair of each species might have been created, as in the instance of man ; and the replenishing of the land, air, and ocean thenceforth left to the natural progress of increase. But to this, the obvious answer is, that the reasons which exist in the instance of man,



The crowning glory of the six days was to come. Physical power, animal affections, and active intelligence, had been already evolved in conjunction with matter ; but a being was now to be

namely, the social duties resulting from acknowledged descent, as filial obedience and the ties of brotherhood and parentage, are applicable to man alone ; that there was no similarity in the declared process by which man and the inferior animals were first formed, man being the immediate work of the Divine hand, while the latter were produced by a general command to the elements ("And God said, Let *the waters* bring forth *abundantly* the moving creature that hath life, and fowl that may fly above the earth," Gen. i. 20.) ; that there is no higher probability that the immense expanses of the world were left to a single pair of each species of animals, than that they were left to a single tree, herb, or blade of grass of each species, a paucity which would have left the earth bare, have rendered it unfit for human support for thousands of years to come, and prohibited the very existence of Eden ; that even the extraordinary power of multiplication among the lower animals seems to be rather for the purpose of keeping up the original proportion, by preventing the extermination of any race, than of increasing their numbers ; that from the beginning a large provision must have been made in the numbers of the weaker animals, for the food of the more powerful carnivorous species ; and that it is perfectly improbable that the existence of any species would be left to the chance of being extinguished in the individual ; that, lastly, we have no evidence in Scripture to authorize any other idea than that the earth in its luxuriance, and the creatures of the earth in their multitude, were the objects of that blessing by which the finished work was pronounced to be "very good." The case of the earth after the Flood is of a different order ; it is that of a world recovering from a Divine infliction, not of a world in its pristine richness and repletion.

formed, exhibiting all those qualities in a superior degree; a more penetrating and various intelligence, passion more sensitive and elevated, and a finer and more applicable combination of physical power. Without wandering into so attractive a subject as the general nature of man, three characteristics may be observed, as constituting a palpable distinction between him and all other animals. His *thirst of knowledge*; or, in its lower degree, that eager curiosity which makes him perpetually seek mental excitement; an impulse variously existing in every race and every rank of mankind, producing, in its perversion, a large share of the follies and crimes of society, but in its natural and nobler exercise, much of our highest enjoyment, our most active utility, and the whole dominion of man over the material world. Another of those great features was his *Improvability*. The faculties and acquirements of the brute soon arrive at their limit, a thousand generations would not advance them further; but man, by his inextinguishable ardour for novelty, and by his exclusive means of transmitting knowledge from generation to generation, perpetually accumulates intellectual opulence. Thus nothing perishes. Every generation, as it goes down to the grave, throws its contribution into the universal treasury; every hand lays a stone on the pyramid of intellectual dominion; the young generation comes into life, not the helpless heir of a soil which its

own labours must force into fertility, but the heir of all the cultivation of all the old successive masters of the land. Yet, unlike all other, the mental culture never wears out the ground. Every advance is in the direction of first principles. The more vigorous the intellect that leads the way, the more rapid is the simplification of its discoveries. Every invasion into the kingdom of ignorance, furnishes a new force for still larger triumph; every new exertion actually generates new instruments of power: progress is thus utterly unrestrained. With the immeasurable depths and heights of nature for the exercise of the understanding, and with its largest acquisitions acting, not as an incumbrance, but a stimulant, not as a weight, but a wing, it is palpably designed to expatiate, enjoy, and conquer, for ever.

The third distinguishing attribute of man was of a still loftier order. *The moral sense*<sup>1</sup>—a totally

<sup>1</sup> Paley's "selfish doctrine" of Expediency has been long since exploded, as a plagiarism from Hume's profligate doctrine of Utility; but his denial of the Moral Sense still has its advocates. It is surprising to find so matter-of-fact a reasoner rejecting a doctrine founded on the experience of every man, and rejecting it on such slippery grounds as, that different nations have had different estimates of the acts which constitute vice; that theft lost its criminality in Sparta, or suicide in Rome, as cannibalism does in New Zealand, or duelling in France. He forgets, that he is here confounding the law with the judge; that it is the opinion of society which makes the vice, (supposing the law of God unknown.) But it is the

new principle, by which his nature was to be connected with the beings of another existence ; a divine portal, which opened to him the perceptions of the world of spirits, sacred obedience, faith, and hope ; the communion of the great family of heaven ; the inheritance of happiness beyond all duration or degree ; the whole uncircumscribed vision of immortality.

This intellect was clothed in a form worthy of its rank. We justly call that perfect, to which we cannot conceive any superior ; and such is the

moral sense which instantly declares to the individual his transgression of that opinion, and *condemns* him accordingly. Paley objects, that the wild boy of Hanover would not exhibit a moral sense on hearing the story of a Roman paricide. True. And for this reason, that the moral sense being solely exercised on acts declared, by human convention or Divine law, to be right or wrong, and a solitary savage in the woods of Hanover having no knowledge of either, the moral sense could not be brought into action. It would be a judge without a tribunal. But the more direct answer to all doubts of the doctrine, is the appeal to experience. It may be unhesitatingly said, that no man, in possession of his understanding, ever committed an act of acknowledged guilt, without feeling at the instant the condemning principle—the *moral sense*, conscience, busy in his breast. Its purpose is not to decide on the guilt, or the degree of guilt of actions ; but to strike the doer of actions, already declared guilty, with a feeling of wrong. He may refuse to obey the conviction, but he cannot refuse to hear the monitor. Perhaps there is no state of the mind, however desperate and depraved, in which conscience does not retain its power to penetrate. Its warnings may be useless ; but if they cannot cure, they still sting.

perfect beauty of the human form in its finer instances, that it actually reaches the highest flight of even that soaring and fastidious thing, the imagination of man. We may create in fancy, but we have before us the limit of all loveliness *conceivable* by human thought. Let the doubter make the experiment, and he will find that, in his highest conception of beauty, he is always borrowing from the human form. Even his angel is but a youth with wings.

But admirable as the form, the faculties, and the spirit, of the first man might have appeared to the sons of heaven, still loftier contemplations must have been connected with him as the head of mankind. Whatever may be the ties that bind the spiritual world, we know that parentage is not among them; and the absence of a tie, which with us constitutes the primal and universal source of social obligation, implies a totally different construction of society. In the idea of parentage, new foundations of society lay before their sight, the gradual existence of countless millions, with their result in the formation of empires, the progressive knowledge, the increasing happiness, the tried and triumphant virtue, the whole vivid and diversified machinery of a vast and novel system of moral impulses, calculated to exist for thousands of years, and to exhibit, in novel and perpetual action, the mercy and the wisdom of the Supreme.

But, elevated and cheering as this view must be, to beings equal to its complete and instant apprehension, why are we to conceive that their view was chained down to our diminutive globe? Why, if the original act of Deity in calling the *universe* into existence, was made a source of angelic rejoicing, should the furnishing of the universe with life have been hidden from them? Why should the great productive process, which had so richly developed the resources of the Divine hand in the earth, have been checked in the expanse of the skies? And why should the high capacities, ardent affections, and devoted love of angels; those who “always behold the face of their Father in heaven,” and are formed to exult in every new declaration of his attributes, have been shut out from so magnificent a revelation of his sovereignty as the simultaneous repletion of the starry worlds with the living works of his will.

## CHAPTER IV.

### THE PLANETARY WORLDS.

THAT the orbs of our system are inhabited, and inhabited by *embodied* minds, perhaps not differing in essentials from ourselves, we have all the evidence that analogy can give ; an evidence closely approaching to demonstration. The general similitude of the planets is so complete, that an observer, standing in the sun, would have as much right to pronounce the earth *uninhabitable* as Mercury or the Georgium Sidus. They all have the same source of light, the same rotation, the same shape, the same form of orbit, the same direction, the same law of impulse and attraction. But their habitancy and its nature may be still more closely reasoned from the palpable provision for that habitancy <sup>1</sup>.

<sup>1</sup> In the work of the celebrated Huygens on this subject, the Cosmotheros, deciding on the state of the planetary population, rather illogically, takes it for granted that they *must* have human organs, from the inconvenience which *we* should feel in wanting them ; thus, that they must have eyes, because

One universal characteristic is their *provision for light*. Meroury and Venus, lying almost involved in the beams of the sun, may be supplied by its direct influence on atmospheres of obvious and extraordinary brilliancy. But, as the planets sweep wider circles, the dispersion of the solar rays 'is palpably compensated by vast reflectors, moons, increasing in number with the distance. Jupiter, at five times our distance from the sun, has four moons, whose varied velocities seem to surround it with a perpetual circle of illumination. Saturn, at double the distance of Jupiter, suffering still more by the dispersion, has seven moons. But as even this number is disproportioned to the distance, and as a larger number of those huge bodies, rolling rapidly round a planet whose density is eight times less than that of the earth, probably might derange its tides, its revolution, or even its frame, an expedient is adopted in the well known ring, a twofold reflector, 30,000 miles broad, and suspended 30,000 miles above the

*we* require them; hands, because we should not be able to work with hoofs, &c. Fontenelle's "*Plurality of Worlds*" is merely a trifling and petty romance, adapted to the toilet of his day, and unworthy of any other designation in ours. Lalande, and some of the later French Savans, have endeavoured to give it importance by learned remarks; but its original frivolity is invincible.

A much more interesting volume, on the *Plurality of Worlds*, as connected with religious views, was published several years since by that intelligent divine, Dr. Nares.



planet, forming an arch of light from edge to edge of the horizon, holding an invariable position in the skies, and doubtless offering a most superb spectacle to those regions of Saturn, over which the double arch, probably coloured with every changing hue of day, pours down the steady splendour of the sun. The Georgium Sidus, at the almost inconceivable distance of twice the diameter of the orbit of Saturn, with the solar radiance two thousand times less than at Mercury, and seeing the sun itself diminished to a twinkling star, is too remote for an exact knowledge of its system. But it evidently has two satellites; the existence of four more is nearly established; and it is the opinion of the chief authorities on such subjects, that it may have ten times the number.

Mars is the only exception to this progressive increase of satellites; but his flame-coloured orb implies some extraordinary distinction in his matter, or in his powers of receiving light. The old measurements of the height of his atmosphere have been doubted; but we are still too slightly informed of the effects of the chemical combination of light with atmosphere, to decide that a change of the simplest kind in the air might not render it totally and essentially luminous. We see on how large a scale, and from what unpromising sources phosphorescence is produced on earth; even mere height would accomplish the purpose of perfect illumination; a few hundred

miles added to our atmosphere would banish night from the globe.

But why are those striking and vast contrivances adopted? We know the uses of light in our world. Why shall we doubt that, in the planets as in the earth, it was made *to be seen*; and that where it existed, there were organs by which it could be seen? But the analogy extends through every point of the scale: every planet has its day and night. What is to forbid our conceiving that this grateful revolution implies, with them as with us, alternate labour and rest, waking and sleep, and beings organized to exert the activity of the one period, and enjoy the refreshment of the other?

Every planet has its period of extreme recess from the sun, and its inclination of the pole to the ecliptic<sup>1</sup>. Thus provided with winter and summer, why are we to doubt that they have the natural adjuncts of winter and summer among ourselves, —seed-time and harvest, the labours and enjoy-

<sup>1</sup> This universal inclination is one of the most remarkable evidences of the general similarity of purpose. The inclination is absolutely necessary to give full effect to the movement in the orbit; for the difference of winter and summer, arising merely from the difference of the greater and lesser axis, would otherwise be almost unfelt. Without this inclination, all the parallels from the Tropics would be subject to an almost unvarying cold, increasing to the Poles. There would doubtless be the advantages of an unvarying length of day and night. But there would be scarcely a perceptible change of seasons.

ments of agriculture? The globular form, the inclination of the axis to the ecliptic, and the protuberance of the equatorial regions, are universal. With us, those properties are the direct causes of variety of climate, difference in the length of days, the great tropical changes, the trade wind, the monsoon, the half year's day and night of the poles; with a whole multitude of influences, shaping the habits and exciting the efforts of the human race, and distinctly devised for this purpose. Why are we to suppose that phenomena in other orbs so closely resembling those, should be constructed without any similarity of object, or without reference to being acted upon by rational existences, constituted, as directly as man, to enjoy the purposes of their several spheres?

But the evidence grows, with every additional glance at the planetary construction. The surfaces of all the planets seem to have been modelled on that of our own: they all appear to have seas, mountains, plains, and valleys; the snow at the poles of Mars is nearly as evident in its regular increase and diminution as the snow in the Arctic Circle. Why should not the existence imply the uses of the ocean, the mountain, the plain, and the valley; and, with them, imply the navigator, the fisher, the hunter, and the husbandman, with all the various connected faculties, shapes of industry, necessities, appetites, excitements, and enjoyments, of body and mind!

On earth, this construction is made for *bodily organs*, and can be perceived and used *only* through bodily organs. Yet, if those organs are limited to our single planet, the waste of the materials of knowledge and possession will have been prolonged during six thousand years, on a scale of the most startling magnitude—in orbs to which the earth is but a toy: in Saturn, nine hundred times its dimensions; in Jupiter, thirteen hundred; in the sun (for he, too, has his day, and probably his year), thirteen hundred thousand times.

But the argument against this enormous waste is stronger still, from the palpable abhorrence of all waste in the constitution of nature. In our world, the extension of existence is a principle. Life is generated, sustained, and spread, wherever life is possible: air, water, herb, clay, every leaf, every drop of dew, all teem with existence. Where man has not yet advanced, there the wild beast, the bird, and the insect, tenant the space, till they retire before the master of the world. If there are desert tracts, in which nothing lives, they are few, and they are not the less obviously employed for the purposes of supporting life in the happier districts of the globe; in heating or cooling the air, and thus maturing the harvests, or refreshing the fiery skies of the regions destined for habitation. On the Zaara may depend largely the fertility of the whole south of Europe. The

Siberian snows act as a refrigerator to the heat which might turn the whole atmosphere of Asia into pestilence.

Yet it will easily be acknowledged, that striking differences in the organization of the planetary inhabitants must be required. The differences of heat and light, which at Mercury were once supposed to require frames of basalt and eyes of crystal, may not be important; since we know that a simple modification of the air might equalize them throughout the system. But there are three sources of difference which cannot admit of any known modification; those arising from the various lengths of the year, from the various gravities, and from the various magnitudes. The ten hours day and night of Jupiter with a year of twelve times the length of ours; the Saturnian year of nearly three times the length of that of Jupiter, a year of more than ten thousand of our days; and the year of the Georgium Sidus, eighty-four times the length of ours; must each imply great diversities in all their products, plants, and animals, and in the habits, instincts, and powers of the race equivalent to man. On earth, the simple addition of a month to the year would require a change in the economy of the whole vegetable and living world. Even the different lengths of the seasons—in Mercury a summer of six weeks, in the Georgium Sidus of forty years—must operate powerfully in modifying the face of nature.

The various gravities cannot be less operative. On Jupiter, the *human* frame would break down by its own weight, or the human muscles be unable to move it. All the action of beings possessing but human strength and stature must totally cease, on a globe exerting a triple or quadruple force of resistance; while in Mars, where the resistance is but a third of the earth's, the human frame might grow to a gigantic height, and every movement be almost a bound through the air. In the newly-discovered planets, it is computed that the height might be still more colossal, and the common spring of the human muscle might make each step a flight fifty feet high.

An equally marked distinction must arise from the vast differences of magnitude in the orbs; presuming, as we may fairly do, that the planetary inhabitants traverse their globes as freely as we do the earth. The four hundred miles circumference of Pallas, and the two hundred and sixty thousand of Jupiter, must require widely different powers in the frames that are to travel them, and perhaps means as different as the foot of the tortoise and the pinion of the eagle. What must be the powers of the form which is to traverse the Sun, more than a million of times the magnitude of our orb, or the feet which are to scale its mountains, a thousand miles high?

But those distinctions are perfectly consistent with the general idea, that the planetary worlds

are inhabited, and inhabited by existences clothed, like the spirit of man, in material bodies. All that we can discover in the laws, construction, and adaptation, of those orbs, is as directly intended for the exercise of material organs, as the most direct contrivance of earth. Pure, bodiless spirit can have no *necessity* for this mechanism ; for its Ideas are not collected by organs. But embodied spirit has all conceivable necessity ; for matter is the source of all its knowledge, the subject on which it acts, the hourly means of its existence, the sole medium of its intercourse. When we see the preparation made on so vast a scale, with so minute a care, and sustained in such symmetry, perfection, and vigour, can we believe that Omnipotence has wrought for nothing, or wrought in vain ? The natural conclusion is, that if the universal frame is made to be known and enjoyed by organized beings, there are such beings to know and enjoy it ; that while the unbodied spirits of heaven receive their knowledge by means still veiled from human conception, a new race of spirits, acquiring their knowledge of creation and the Creator through the senses, fill the whole of the planetary worlds.

But the conception is entitled to ascend higher still. The late discoveries of the telescope have abolished the name of fixed stars. There are *no* fixed stars : to the farthest reach of vision all are in movement, revolving round each other. Thus

the same principle by which a pebble falls to the ground, extends through the suns and systems of the universe. Their light too is the same with ours ; why not the light, the gravity, and the motion, for the same purpose, of providing for the existence of beings of soul and body ? Scriptural authority substantiates this truth by the still more urgent declarations of the influence of the Atonement on the dwellers in the higher regions of the universe. The single instance from the Epistle to the Colossians is unanswerable. St. Paul describes the result of this stupendous act of Deity to be “ the reconciliation of all things unto himself, whether they be *things in earth, or things in heaven* ;” of course, sentient and intellectual beings alike in both ; yet *not* angelic, for the fate of the angels had been already decided, the guilty consigned to chains and darkness, and the pure “ beholding the face of their Father in heaven.”

If this vast increase of view, the repletion of the universe with intellectual beings, were thrown open to angelic inquiry, the simplest display of their various powers and habitudes might be a source of endless science. Yet how much must the gratification of even this high inquiry fall short of the interest belonging to them as moral existences ; the contemplation of their final purposes in the boundless multitude of worlds ; the golden chain of causality by which the Divine determination is unconsciously, yet inevitably,



accomplished ; the prospective view of the shapes taken by individual character in the infinite variety of the universal struggle of good and ill ; the revolutions of the ten thousand empires, the continual advances of intellectual power, noble passion, generous ambition, vivid knowledge, and illustrious virtue ; the whole great instrumentality by which the Sovereign of all stimulates the energies and moulds the freewill of all. Is it possible to doubt that the immensity and animation of such a view would have formed a study fitting for angelic faculties, capable of giving them an increase of knowledge, and even adapted to enlarge their powers of enjoyment ; or is it possible to conceive that they who rejoice over the return of a single sinner, would have been excluded in this hour of peculiar glory from the contemplation of scenes made to fill the highest natures with sacred sympathy for the children of their common Father, and triumph in the exhaustless benevolence of their King ?

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Whether human science will ever be enabled to arrive at the actual proof of planetary habitancy, may be a question. But it will be almost a reproach to the industry of our astronomers, if we should be left much longer destitute of this proof with respect to an orb so near us as the Moon. Perhaps the course of astronomical science, since the beginning of the century, has been rather too

ambitious ; and both time and ability have been wasted in exploring those remoter tracts of the universe, which delight vigorous curiosity more than they seem capable of adding to available knowledge. The imperfection of the telescope is still a reproach to our mechanical dexterity. Even in a body so accessible as the moon, we have scarcely added to the discoveries of the old selenographers. In the present state of the telescope, it is computed that even a city of the size of London would not be discoverable on the Lunar disk, unless it were in a state of conflagration, and then, only on the dark side of the orb. Till we have superior means, of course, the highly interesting question of the habitancy, must wait for decision. Yet all that we have yet ascertained of the actual configuration of the Lunar surface, strongly assists the general idea of habitancy. It palpably possesses mountain, plain, and valley. The chief distinction from our globe is, that the valleys are exceedingly numerous, and apparently of immense depth ; and that, independently of every shape of ridge and declivity of hill, it abounds in isolated mountains rising from the centre of plains, forty or fifty miles in diameter, and surrounded by lofty mountain chains. Neither clouds, atmosphere, or ocean, are yet discoverable.

The non-existence of atmosphere would form an argument only against habitancy by beings possessing the frame and functions of man ; but

if there be no sea on the hemisphere turned to the earth, there would probably be no clouds ; and if no clouds, we should be deprived of almost the only mode of detecting the presence of an atmosphere. The projection of stars on the Lunar limb, has been equally asserted and denied. Yet an atmosphere, proportioned to the magnitude of the orb, might exist without influencing the appulse of a star visibly to the telescope. But if volcanoes are actually seen blazing in the dark phase, as a crowd of astronomers contend, and among them the great observer, the late Herschell ; the moon *must* have an atmosphere ; or if the conical hills that spot her disk, have all been volcanic, as is the opinion of his distinguished son, her atmosphere may have existed since the hour of her creation.

Thus the argument from the general repletion of nature, remains unaltered. While we see every leaf on earth teeming with life, why are we to conceive that so vast a space as the surface of a sphere 6,000 miles in circumference is utterly destitute of living existence ? Or, that while it affords such various and powerful displays of the Divine agency, it should not contain intellects capable of being excited and elevated by their knowledge. The surface of the moon probably abounds in landscapes of surpassing loveliness. Its deep central valleys and precipitous hills, present the picture of our boldest Alpine regions,

transferred to a tropical climate; but its chief characteristic, the isolated hills, may be of yet more striking beauty. We can scarcely conceive a combination more fitted for the display of all natural loveliness, than a noble mountain, a perfect cone, two miles high, shooting up from the bosom of a vast valley, surrounded with a mountain chain of an hundred and fifty miles. If the common fertility of nature, which we find so varied and so irrestrainable on earth, should have thrown vegetation over this fine frame, what boundless and rich diversity of field and forest might not spread before the eye in the countless depths and heights, the luxuriant sides and bright pinnacles of the mountains, and the shaded glens and declivities at their feet; and all, like the gardens of the Abyssinian tale, shut in from the surrounding world.

But, to the inhabitants of this fine satellite, the night may be scarcely less lovely than the day. To them our globe must present a spectacle, altogether superior to any exhibited to us in the heavens; they see it as a moon, pouring down a flood of illumination from a disk nearly sixteen times the size of their orb to us. It has all the varieties of increase, full, and wane; but it always remains fixed in the same point of their heaven—to some always in the horizon, to others always in the zenith; but to all exhibiting a variety which is not given to the inhabitant of earth,

in either sun or star. All its regions are seen revolving before the eye every twenty-four hours. The illumination must be of great power, for its effects on the lunar disk are distinctly visible even at the immense distance between the spheres.

With the same year, the moon has a day and a night fifteen times the length of ours. And it is not improbable that the peculiar configuration of its almost innumerable hills and valleys may be for the purpose of shelter against the excessive and prolonged exposure to the light and heat. In those immense valleys, shielded by their depth, and by the walls of precipice above them, may be gathered the chief population, those cities which we vainly look for on the surface, and the more abundant vegetable and animal means of supporting life. However undecided all conjecture on the subject must be, it is unquestionable that shade is provided in a much larger proportion than on the earth; that fissures and mountains exist in extraordinary numbers; and, as is discoverable by the common telescope, that, except at the brief period of full moon, the disk is singularly covered with slanting pyramids of shade, or masses of darkness thrown forward from the sides of the precipices. This shelter may be rendered necessary by the absence of an ocean, with us the great temperer of climate and refresher of the air. And such precautions and counterbalances cannot be conceived too minute for

nature, when we see even so trivial a point in space as a West-India Island, rendered habitable only by the mechanism of a daily sea breeze, without which it would be a lazaret-house; a perpetual shield of cloud thrown over the equatorial regions, without which they would be a furnace; and a gulf stream, in a perpetual circuit of warmth and movement, renewing the healthiness and temperature of the ocean.

The absence of sea in the moon has been partially accounted for by the extraordinary deviation from the globular form which would be necessary against tides influenced by so powerful and near an orb as the earth; a deviation which might greatly impede that reflection of light declared to be one of its principal purposes; without taking into account the space that must be almost totally lost to that purpose, by a large expanse of waters. Yet this does not prohibit the existence of sea in the opposite hemisphere.

A striking distinction also is, that the earth is visible but from one hemisphere of the moon: yet this distinction may only add to the variety and interest of her skies. To the dweller on the opposite side, the brilliancy of the starry region is thus open, unimpeded by the overwhelming effulgence of our orb. Yet he has but to travel to the horizon, to see the grand luminary of his heaven, the Earth, in whose pure magnificence and placid glory he may imagine, even as idly as we do of

the orbs above our heads, that he sees a world in which guilt never trod, a guarded region of existence, a celestial paradise, untroubled by the passions of life around him, and untouched by the grave.

## CHAPTER V.

### THE MOSAIC GEOLOGY.

THE Books of Moses are so closely connected with revelation, that infidelity, in all ages, has made them a peculiar object of attack. The Atheists and Deists of the last century assailed them on the side of their antiquities, morality, and descriptions of the Divine attributes. But those assailants were so completely convicted of ignorance, groundless assertions, and false logic, that they rapidly shrank, and were heard of no more. Yet as infidelity will exist, so long as there are those who feel a personal interest in overthrowing the credit of the great rebuker of personal vice ; or a public interest in breaking up the obligations which form the great cement of all society ; who “hate the light, because their deeds are dark,” or who would extinguish the belief in a God, as an essential step to the extinction of allegiance to a king ; the union of Jacobinism and Infidelity on the Continent has been distinguished by a series of attempts to overthrow the credit of the inspired



record. Cosmogony, a system bearing the same contemptible relation to the science of the earth, which the search for the philosopher's stone bears to the science of metals; has been fixed on as the point from which the attack is especially to be made. The German Geologists, a race of men more fitted to collect facts than to draw conclusions; and the French Geologists, another race proverbial for flying to the conclusion in scorn of the tardy wisdom of the facts; have thus invented a succession of theories, all alike vague, baseless, and perishing; yet all, as they successively go down, equally grasping at a name by hostility to the narrative of Moses. The whole spirit of the foreign school has been to substitute secondary causes for Divine, to make mechanism an ultimate principle, to sneer down the record which vindicates the work of Deity, and finally to exile the Deity himself alike from the creation and the government of his world.

The Mosaic history declares that the whole fabric of the globe was formed, and furnished with vegetable and animal life, by the immediate act of the Divine will, in six days. The Foreign Geology, or Cosmogony, raised on the supposed facts of geological knowledge, affirms, on the contrary, that this fabric was *not* formed and furnished by the immediate Divine will, but by the processes of nature; and that, instead of being completed in six days, it could not have been

completed in as many thousand, or perhaps ten times as many thousand, years.

The rash policy of attempting to convert an adversary by conceding all that he claims, has induced some writers of our country to propose various compromises on this subject. It has thus been said, that the word *day* may not be conclusive; that it may have been meant for a year, for six thousand years, for any indefinite duration. But this spirit of compromise is, in every form, totally inadmissible. The Sacred Historian as plainly expresses the common day of twenty-four hours, as it can be expressed in language; even as if for the direct purpose of putting an end to all ambiguity, he defines it by "a day of morning and evening," a day like every other day. The word is the same which is used for the purpose throughout the Bible. The historian was writing to Jews, who knew of no other day. If he had meant six thousand years, no reason can be assigned why he should not have said six thousand years. The length of the period could not have been derogatory to the honour of the Deity, for the making of a world, in whatever time, must be equally beyond the powers of man<sup>1</sup>.

<sup>1</sup> Mr. Penn satisfactorily disposes of the interpretations which would make the Mosaic day indefinite. Thus, it is objected—1st. that it sometimes denotes a single *revolution* of the earth round its axis, which, according to the increased or decreased velocity of the globe, might equally mean an hour or a thousand years.

Another compromise is, that it was not the duty of the historian to give a *philosophical*

But the literal meaning of the word is simply the "time between two sunsets" (*Simon : Lex. Heb.*); in strictness, the time of heat and light, יוֹם, *yom*, from *yama, ferbuit*.

2dly, that it sometimes denotes a year, as in Numb. xiv. 34. "After the number of days in which ye searched the land, even forty days, each day (*yom*) for a year (*shanah*) shall ye bear your iniquities, even forty years." And (Ezek. iv. 6.) "Thou shalt bear the iniquity of the house of Judah forty days; I have appointed thee each day (*yom*) for a year" (*shanah*).

But here the distinction between the *day* and the *year* is perfectly preserved.

3dly, that it denotes a whole Chiliad, (Psalm xc. 4.) "A thousand years in thy sight are but as yesterday." But the objects are still kept perfectly distinct. If day and year were not distinguished in the passage, the Psalmist's object, which is to illustrate the independence of the Divine actions on time, would be defeated.

4thly, it is said that it denotes a period of indefinite length, as "the *day* of the Lord." (Zech. xiv. 7.) "And it shall come to pass in that day, that the light shall not be clear nor dark."

But here it denotes the *presence* of a time, but not its duration. Thus the common phrase of the last day simply intimates that a time is to come when judgment shall commence, without inferring any thing as to the length of the period.

5thly, that it denotes years, as in the celebrated passage, (Dan. xii. 11.) "And from the time the daily sacrifice shall be taken away, there shall be days (*yamim*) a thousand two hundred and ninety." Mr. Penn conceives that this is answered by saying, that *yom* in the plural may signify a year, because the year is only a plurality of days, a sense in which it is familiar to the student. But the true answer is, that in this passage "days" are literally meant, and that the prophecy alludes merely to the desolation by Epiphanes.

treatise. This will be fully admitted—it cannot be the duty of any historian. But if he states philosophical facts, it is as much his duty to state them truly as any other: they become historical facts. If Moses tells us that God created in one day, what he did *not* create in one day, but in six thousand years; he violates truth, and forfeits his rank as a historian.

Another compromise is, that the Mosaic phrase, “In the beginning,” is indefinite, and gives sufficient latitude for all that the foreign geology demands. But the limit is not only defined by the declaration that, on the sixth day “the heavens and the earth were finished, and all the host of them. And God rested on the seventh day from all his work which he had made” (a seventh portion of time, of *equal length* with six preceding, during which he had wrought, being thus set apart, to signify the completion of his work), but we have the limit also fixed by a document with which the pen of Moses could have had no interference. The Ten Commandments are the direct language, not of Moses, but of God. Yet they declare that, “in *six days* the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is:” thus, with plain precision, circumscribing the *whole* time of Creation. In every view of the case, compromise is at an end.

The general statement of modern geology, as it is advanced by Cuvier and his school, is, that

the earth was primarily a chaos ; that matter first existed merely in its elementary particles ; that its present forms were produced by the course of nature : and, that as this course occupies great periods in effecting such changes as now occur, the production of those forms must have occupied many ages. Still, of those precipitate theorists are we not entitled to ask, in the first instance, whether there exists any historic ground for this chaos, or any ground beyond some fragments of ancient poetry, and some oriental mysticisms, palpably absurd, and nearly unintelligible ? or whether the chief known materials of the earth have any reference to time ? Do granites, or coal, or metals, grow ? Or, if they do, must not their progress be of such immeasurable tardiness, as to occupy periods totally embarrassing to the geologist—not tens of thousands, but millions, of years ? Or, whether the laws of bodies are not largely dependent on the forms of bodies ; and, to that extent, incapable of acting in a mere confusion of elementary particles of all kinds ? Or, whether, if they acted at all in a world of particles, thus equally comminuted and separated, they were not much more likely to have continued the confusion for ever ? Or, whether there is any known process in nature by which the elementary particles of caloric, for example, immersed in a vast, turbid colluvies of water, clay, earths, metals, and the numberless other adverse

components of the earth, could discover each other, make their way through a mass as large as the globe, and coalesce into flame? On such subjects, man's almost total ignorance of the *principles* of nature necessarily throws him back on the evidence of the senses: he can trust to nothing else. We thus admit the growth of the sand-stones, and other depository substances, because we see it take place. When we shall have similar evidence for the other processes, we shall believe that they are effected by what is termed the course of nature. Till then, wanting the only safe guide to natural knowledge, we rightly withhold our conviction. Yet, if authority were to decide, we have against the chaotic theory the names of the first philosophers of the world.

“It seems probable to me,” says Newton, “that God, in the beginning, formed matter in solid, massy, hard, impenetrable, moveable particles, of such sizes and figures, and with such other properties, and in such proportions to space, as most conduced to the end for which he formed them. All material things seem to have been composed of the hard and solid particles above-mentioned, *variously associated in the first Creation* by the councils of an *Intelligent Agent*. For, it became HIM, who created them, to *set them in order*. And if HE did so, it is *unphilosophical* to seek for any other origin of this world, or to pretend that it might *rise out of a chaos* by the

*mere laws of nature.* Though, being once formed, it may *continue by those laws* for many ages<sup>1</sup>."

Bacon's language is equally distinct. "In the works of the Creation, we behold a twofold emanation of the Divine virtue: of which the one relates to its power, the other to its wisdom. The former is especially observed in the *creating* the material mass; the latter, in the *disposing the beauty of its form*. This being established, it is to be remarked, that *there is nothing in the history of the Creation* to invalidate the fact that the mass and substance of heaven and earth was created, *confusa*, undistinguishable, *in one moment of time*; but that *six days were assigned for disposing and adjusting it*. We may further observe, that, in the creation of matter, it is not related, "God said, Let the heaven and the earth be," as is related of the other works which ensued; but, simply and actually, "God created the heavens and the earth:" so that the *matter* itself seems to have been, as it were, a work of hand; but the introduction of its form bears the style of a *law or decree*<sup>2</sup>."

In those declarations of the two most profound thinkers that, perhaps, Europe has ever seen, the most distinct negative is given to the fantasies of the modern theory. Newton refers more pecu-

<sup>1</sup> Optics, L. 3.

<sup>2</sup> De Augm. Scien. L. 1.

liarly to the point in question,—the giving of suitable forms to the masses of particles ; Bacon, to the general furnishing of the surface : but both equally sustain the sacred history.

A subsidiary argument of the foreign geologist is, that the remnants of fishes retain the lowest position in the strata ; those of the paleotheria and other extinct animals, the next ; and those of elephants and the other living races, that nearest the surface. To make this statement the more effective, it is *insinuated* that those deposits preserve the same relative positions every where, and that, in fact, they form something nearly approaching to concentric coats round the globe. Thus the theory is, that there was a fish world, followed by a paleotherian world, followed again by a wild beast world ; and all those prior to the Mosaic period of the Creation. This, however, is only a specimen of the rage of foreign philosophy for generalization. The fact is, that those deposits are irregular in the extreme, are found under all varieties of circumstance, and the strata in which they lie are so few, and so widely interrupted, that it would be utterly absurd to consider them as forming any of the important integuments of the globe. But are we physically authorised even to *conjecture* this enlargement of the globe by successive concentric layers ? From what source was the material to come ? Are we en-



titled to believe that an additional ounce of matter has been given to its mass since it was first sent from the hands of the Creator? •

The next attempt to invalidate the history, applies to the Deluge; which the foreign geology affirms, and justly, to be wholly inadequate to account for the phenomena of the earth's surface, hitherto attributed to its operation. But, on this point, the dispute is merely with those who misconceive the record. Until nearly our own day, it was too much the custom to refer all the deposits and disruptions of the strata to the Deluge; an assertion never made by the history, and for which, therefore, it cannot be accountable. The foreign geology states, and states truly, that vast beds of sea shells have been found on mountain tops, and in other locations, in which they could not have been placed by a twelvemonth's flood; and that the remnants of fish and shells have been found imbedded in the soil, in such perfect preservation, as to prove that they had been deposited in the bed of a tranquil water during a long series of years. It further states, that four *general* strata are distinguishable in the shell or exterior of the globe; a *Tertiary*, or that stratum which covers the surface, and which is the subject of cultivation, &c.; a *Secondary*, or *Sedimentary*, under it, exhibiting the long action of water, and containing plants and bones; an *Intermediate*, or *Fragmentary*, consisting of portions of shattered

granite, agglutinated by time, and forming solid masses, as millstone grit, and pudding stone, and occasionally, though seldom, exhibiting organic remains; and below this bed a fourth, the *Primary*, or *Crystalline*, the most solid bed to which we have penetrated, and in which no organic remains are to be found.

\* The Scriptural geologist, admitting for the moment, this system of stratification, irregular and partial as it is,—for who has penetrated to the granite frame, or who has shown the continuity of the three coats which geology has thus wrapt round it?—yet altogether denies that any fact of the disruption militates against the record. The ancient defenders and the modern impugnors of that record, have equally overlooked a statement fully adequate to account for all the phenomena of deposit and disruption—the command of God, on the third day, that a certain portion of the globe should be hollowed for the sea-bed; thus laying a great extent of the earth's surface under water, for the whole period from the Creation to the Deluge, and that portion, at the recovery from the Deluge, constituting the present dry land<sup>1</sup>. On this subject, all the leading

<sup>1</sup> To this it has been objected that—"the ascertained density of the earth being greater than that which would result from an entirely solid sphere of the most compact known rock, renders the existence of any such cavity very doubtful." (*Conybeare, Geol. of England.*) [But,

geologists unconsciously sustain the history<sup>1</sup>.—"This change from the bed of the sea to our present continents," says De Luc, "is so fully established, that the chief object of geology now is only to explain how the sea, after having been elevated above our continents, has sunk under them, and left them dry<sup>2</sup>."—"The geologists agree only in this," says Cuvier<sup>3</sup>, "that *the sea has changed its place*."—D'Aubuisson tells us that "in examining the mineral masses of the earth, every thing concurs to indicate, *that this our habitation* has undergone great changes and great revolutions; that the sea shells incrustated in the

But, passing over the curiously unphilosophical expressions of *density resulting* from a solid sphere, the existence of the sea-bed would require, not a great *internal* cavity, but simply an excavation so trivial as one four miles deep in a mass of 8000 in diameter. The lightness of the superficial crust, proves that the interior *must* contain vast masses of substance much heavier than twice the weight of granite; and the phænomena of volcanoes and earthquakes equally prove that there are great unoccupied spaces below the surface. The true question is, not of the *density*, whether uniform or irregular, but of the *gravity* of the globe. The ballast of a ship might show to all but a determined geologist, that an open space was procurable without the sacrifice of the general gravity of the body. A nucleus of 2000 miles of gold or platina, might leave the rest of the interior hollow; but even in those substances, have we arrived at the *limit of density*? Who shall say that a mass, the size of a man's head or hand, might not be made to outweigh the globe?

<sup>1</sup> Lett. Geol.<sup>2</sup> Ibid.<sup>3</sup> Discours. Prelim.

masses of mountains, present irrefutable testimony to our eyes, that the sea anciently subsisted, *upon our present continents*, and that animals inhabited those shells, *before* the mineral masses in which they are imbedded were formed<sup>1</sup>.” “ Every thing also concurs to indicate, that the *plains of the earth*, such as those of Alsace, Holland, Lombardy, &c. were *not* deposited by the present rivers, but in the *bosom*, or bed of a tranquil water; that the *present* state of the earth dates only from the retreat of that water, and that the date is not very ancient.” Cuvier adds, that “ it cannot be carried back above five or six thousand years<sup>2</sup>.” Still later authority states, “ that there is scarcely any land hitherto examined in Europe, Northern Asia, or North America, which has not been raised from the bosom of the deep, *since the origin* of the carboniferous rocks<sup>3</sup>.” “ All circumstances point to one conclusion, all concur, with wonderful harmony, to establish the prevalence, through the northern hemisphere, of a great ocean, interspersed with small Isles<sup>4</sup>.”

The Sacred History, fully agreeing with this statement, assigns the period during which the ocean bed occupied this portion of the globe. By the chronology of the Septuagint (now the established one) it was no less than 2256 years,

<sup>1</sup> Vol. i. 8.

<sup>2</sup> Discours Preliminaire.

<sup>3</sup> Lyell, Geology.

<sup>4</sup> Vol. i. 145. 150.

a period long enough for the whole sedimentary process, the tranquil deposit of all those marine substances which we find so accurately preserved in the soil, and to which we know that a similar deposit is *now making* in the bed of the sea. And in this ordination of things we have only another proof of the perpetual care of Providence. Though the original sea-bed was broken in by an operation, whose rapidity implies its prodigious violence, we now see, that the disruption was regulated with a direct view to the subsistence and enjoyments of the future inhabitants of that gulf, when it should be raised out of the ocean, and become dry land. The fracture of the strata by that concussion was essential to the habitancy of the post-diluvian world : for it is directly owing to those mingled and irregular positions of the surface, that we enjoy springs, an easy access to minerals, diversities of soil, and a multitude of other advantages. Nothing can be clearer than that the deposit of the remnants of animal and vegetable life was perfectly adapted for the purposes to which that sedimentary and fertilized surface was to be afterwards turned by man ; and that the mountain ranges, the valleys, the channels of rivers, and the general features of our continents, whether shaped at the original sinking of the ocean bed, or at its rising after the Deluge, were shaped with an express view to their subsequent uses to the living world. We see the mountain

ranges, distributing perpetual irrigation to the regions at their feet; the valleys, expressly posited for the reception of the soil worked down from the mountains; the channels of the rivers, scooped by the evident *designation* of the Divine hand, through vast spaces of level country, and formed with a direct view to the double object of fertilizing the soil, and serving as matchless means of communication.

All the objections fall before the consistency and truth of the Mosaic history. But geology is libelled by those objections: they are the offspring of another parent, Cosmogony, a charlatanism, bearing the same reference to geology, which astrology bore to the true science of the stars.

The honest acknowledgment, if we could extort it from foreign vanity, is, that Geology is yet too young to venture upon system. It wants vigour, consistency, and clearness, for the erection of any tolerable theory. Instead of the flourishing promise, that it is to acquaint us with the original constitution of the globe; the true confession would be, that, scarcely more than fifty years<sup>1</sup> old, it is still—a meagre collection of trivial facts, gathered by loose inquiry, and arranged by imperfect knowledge. It must for ages be occupied with detail. The millionth part of the earth's surface has not

<sup>1</sup> Its birth is dated from the appointment of Werner to the Mineralogical Chair at Freyberg, in 1775.

yet been examined. A De Saussure has ranged some of the Alpine districts ; a Humboldt has gathered specimens in some of the fissures of the Andes ; a Pallas has mineralized among a few of the pinnacles of the Siberian chain ; a Werner has visited the Saxon mines ; a Cuvier has dug into the chalk pits of Paris ; a summer month's excursion to the Monte Volca, or a holiday week's to Maestricht, has furnished philosophers of smaller dimensions with fragments of shells and fish bones. On this scale, the surface even of Europe would not be examined in five hundred years. But what has become, in the meantime, of the great provinces of the globe ? Who has given us the Geology of Africa, Arabia, Persia, India, Tartary, or the Northern and Southern Americas ? And is it this feeble miscellany of rambling observation ; this infant, tottering and feeling its way along the dark chambers of a science, probably the most intricate of all, and physically the most inaccessible, that is to be set forth as the overthrower of Scripture ? The deepest point of earth to which man has penetrated is not a mile from the surface, and this is to let us into the secret of a structure eight thousand miles in diameter ! As well might anatomy boast of discovering the structure of an elephant, through the orifice left in its hide by plucking out a hair. No man who deserves the name of philosopher will be insensible to the

measureless impotence of Geology for purposes of this magnitude ;—as no manly and candid disciple of Science will believe, that in this unaffected scorn of presumptuous theory <sup>1</sup>, there is any disregard of the honours of legitimate knowledge.

The “Theories of the Earth” would form, as the mind might be in the mood, one of the most ludicrous, or most melancholy, chapters in the history of the human understanding. The Anti-Mosaical Geology but adds its share to this general memorial of human vanity. The “Successive worlds” of Cuvier will soon be gathered to the dust in which so many of its predecessors have been forgotten. Still the process of empiricism will go on, and one infidel absurdity will follow another, until Geology feels that conjecture is not science, and that her business is to collect facts, and leave the fabrication of worlds to sciolists and romancers.

The following list of Cosmogonies, by names which were among the most distinguished of their day, and were once worshipped with all the honours of partizanship ; only shows into what follies men even of keen intellects and extensive knowledge may plunge, under the guidance of vanity ; and how short a date may befall systems claiming

<sup>1</sup> The London Geological Society has, with English good sense, abjured the foreign habit of wasting time, and disappointing the national expectation, by System making.



to live for ever. To begin with Burnet—of those conflicting builders of worlds one of the most eloquent and learned, and by no means the most irrational.

“The earth,” says Burnet, “was first invested with an uniform light crust, which covered the abyss of the sea, and which being broken up for the production of the Deluge, formed the mountains by its fragments.”—*Theoria Sacra*.

“The Deluge,” says Woodward, “was occasioned by a momentary suspension of cohesion among the particles of mineral bodies. The whole mass of the globe was dissolved, and the paste thus formed became penetrated with shells.”—*Essay*.

“God raised up,” says Schenckzer, “the mountains, for the purpose of allowing the waters which had produced the Deluge to run off, and selected those places in which were the greatest quantity of rocks, without which the mountains could not have supported themselves.”—*Mem. de l'Academ*.

“The earth was formed from the atmosphere of one comet, and deluged by the train of another. The heat which it retained from its origin was the cause of exciting its inhabitants to sin, for which they were all drowned, excepting the fishes, which, having been fortunately exempt from the heat, remained innocent.”—*Whiston, New Theory*.

“The earth is an extinguished sun, a vitrified globe, on which the vapours falling down again, after it had cooled, formed seas, which afterwards

deposited the limestone formations.”—*Leibnitz Protozœa*.

“The whole globe was covered with water many thousand years. The water gradually retired. All the land animals were originally inhabitants of the sea. Man was originally a fish; and there are still fish to be met with in the ocean which are half men, on their progress to the perfect human shape, and whose descendants will in process of time become men.”—*Demaillet*.

“The earth was a fragment of the sun, struck off red hot by the blow of a comet, together with all the other planets, which were also red hot fragments. The age of the world then can be calculated from the number of years which it would take to cool so large a mass from a red heat down to its present temperature. But it is of course growing colder every year, and, as well as the other planets, must finally be a globe of ice.”—*Buffon Theorie*.

“All things originally were fluid. The waters gave birth to microscopic insects; the insects, in the course of ages, *magnified themselves* into the larger animals; the animals, in the course of ages, converted a portion of the water into calcareous earth; the vegetables converted another portion into clay! Those two substances, in the course of ages, converted themselves into silex; and *thus* the siliceous mountains are the oldest of all. All the solid parts of the earth, *therefore*, owe

their existence to life, and without life, the globe would still be entirely liquid.”—*Lamarck*. This, too, is the favourite mode among the *German philosophers!* of accounting for the formation and filling of the world.

“ The earth is a great animal ; it is alive ; a vital fluid circulates in it ; every particle of it is alive ; it has instinct and volition, even to the most elementary molecules, which attract and repel each other according to sympathies and antipathies. Every mineral has the power of converting immense masses into its own nature, as we convert food into flesh and blood. The mountains are the respiratory organs of the globe ! The schists are the organs of secretion ; the mineral veins are *abscesses* ; and the metals are the products of disease, for which reason most of them have a repulsive smell.”—*Patrin. Dict. d'Histoire Naturelle*.

“ All is done by polarization.”—*Oken*.

“ All is done by crystallization.”—*Delametherie*.

Thus far cosmogony assists us in the origin of the globe, and thus far *philosophy* is satisfied with its penetration into the nature of things. The present condition of the earth's surface exercises opinions of not less variety and value.

“ The mountains are gradually washed down, and spread over the bottom of the ocean. They are there heated under an enormous pressure, and formed into strata, ready to be raised to the

surface by the same enormous heat, when necessary."—*Hutton*.

"The water was originally divided into lakes, at various elevations, where, having done their work of depositors of layers of shells, they began their descent, as down the steps of an amphitheatre, and finally found their way into the bed of the ocean."—*Lamanon, Journal de Physique*.

"All was the work of remarkable tides. Tides of seven or eight hundred fathoms deep having carried off, from time to time, the matter lying at the bottom of the sea, threw it, in the forms of mountains and hills, upon the original plains and valleys of the globe."—*Dolomieu*.

"The earth is nothing but a heap of meteoric stones, which falling, from time to time, in the course of ages, contrived to agglutinate themselves together, and preserve the fragments of the different animals of the different *stars!* from which they were projected. And this *amply* accounts for the fossil remains of unknown animals."—*De Marschall*.

"The globe is a vast hollow, containing a vast magnet, which is moved from pole to pole by the attraction of comets, thus constantly shifting the centre of gravity, and drawing up the waters of the surface after it. A process which *perfectly* accounts for deluges, tides, and every thing."—*Bertrand*.

Such is the science ! But the most curious feature

of the whole is, that Cuvier, after honestly confessing that, by performances of this nature, “geology had become ridiculous,” himself adds to the list, by a cosmogony founded on the detection of the bones of lizards in the chalk-pits of Paris, which, as usual, “*perfectly* establishes a succession of deluges,” &c., and, this step being gained, as perfectly accounts, through them, for all deposits, fractures, stratifications, &c. &c.

The ignorance of religion frequently exhibited by men of science has long been a subject of astonishment; and the reason has been sought in some natural disability of the scientific mind for moral evidence. But this palliative is infirm. The truer reason is, that the ordinary race of men of science take their full share in the thoughtlessness, vice, and vanity of mankind. If the majority of them are Deists, it is simply because the majority of mankind are content with the mere acknowledgment of a Something above, which regulates the seasons, and keeps the world together<sup>1</sup>. Christianity stands before the man of

<sup>1</sup> With what a noble combination of philosophy and religion, Newton pronounces against thus degrading the idea of the Godhead:—“*Hæc omnia*,” &c. “All those works, formed by one Wisdom, belong to the dominion of ONE. HE rules all,—not as the *soul of the world*, but as the *Lord of all*; and, from that dominion, He is named the LORD GOD ALMIGHTY. For God is a relative word, and refers to servants; and the divinity and sovereignty of GOD are not over his own body, as

science, as it does before all other men, offering a testimony absolutely irresistible by the unprejudiced understanding. But the testimony is thrown away on eyes that will not see, and ears that will not hear; on minds too indolent, or too busy to inquire; or too vicious or too vain to comprehend.

The point of importance is, that the homage paid to the philosopher should not impair the higher homage due to Religion; that the world should not be prejudiced against Revelation, by folly covered with the cloak of wisdom.

The fact is unquestionable, that even distinguished accomplishment in science is consistent with marked deficiency in some of the noblest powers of the mind<sup>1</sup>. The French philosophers of the last century were at the head of European science; but, from the moment when they left their diagrams, they were helpless in the hand of faction: they were moles, bewildered in the sunshine; reversing the old process, they were first deceivers, and then dupes; transferring them-

those think to whom He is but the soul of the world, but over his servants."—*Schol. Gener. Princep. Nutti*. L. 3.

<sup>1</sup> Napoleon, in the policy of paying court to science, appointed the celebrated La Place one of his Ministers. But he soon found the total incapacity of this head of French science for public business; and was forced to dismiss him. "He brought nothing with him into the Council," said Napoleon, afterwards; "he was incapable of a large view; his brain was like his books, all *infimement petits*."

selves to statesmanship, they vitiated a reform into a revolution ; in which the only remaining question is, whether the crimes exceeded the blunders, or the blunders the crimes ? They hurried on from folly to folly, until they were rebuked by the scaffold, and perished, leaving to the world the moral of scientific vanity. . -

Yet, even within the province of the pure sciences ; that guarded realm, where the severity of truth is worshipped apart from the world ; we meet with constant proof of the helplessness of knowledge to steady the intellectual step, and the hopelessness of the highest speculative powers to act as substitutes for the manly logic of the mind. The history of the most sublime of them all, Astronomy, is humiliated by reveries earth-born in every feature. Every advance of truth had its following shadow. If the extravagances of the Greek systems, the Alexandrian epicycles, the Tychonic revolutions, or the whirlpools of Descartes, are to be looked on only as the natural results of scientific childhood ; with what eyes are we to look on a man like Kepler, drawing *horoscopes* ! or pronouncing that the planets were but celestial flowers and insects, sporting through the heavens for their season, and then doomed to perish, like their kindred buds and butterflies ? Or on so calm and indefatigable an observer as the late Herschel, imagining the fabrication of comets and stars in congestions of the nebular matter, and seeing

new tadpole worlds growing in knots and strings? Or on the theorists of the projection of the asteroids from an exploding planet, shooting its fragments round the sun, not rugged and shapeless, but smooth as cannon-balls from a mould? Or on the calculators of the heat and cold of the planets; who turned Mercury into a ball of fire, and Saturn into a ball of ice; without regarding how slight an alteration in the atmosphere might equalize all temperatures? Or on the still more determined calculators of the heat and impulse of comets; while the strong probability is, that the comet, in general, is no more capable of heat than a handful of dust, nor more solid than a cloud?

From examples of this order in their exclusive department, we are to learn how little deference is due to scientific authorities in matters beyond their survey. The pure sciences must be of indestructible value, from their uses to man in the natural world; but they must not be suffered to act as repellents from the infinitely more useful and elevated studies of the spirit of man—the operations of the moral world; and the truths, laws, and hopes of the world beyond the grave; all comprehended in the great science of Christianity. Yet, it is only in the narrower minds, after all, that science is an infidel. “*Hæc de Deo*,” says the prince of philosophers, at the close of his sublime description of the Deity: “Thus



far concerning God ; to discourse of whom, from the appearances of things, is the *province of natural philosophy.*”

But, if even the fixed sciences are open to such weaknesses ; by what right shall geology claim a place in competition with Scripture ? What respect can be paid to the crudities of a science in its cradle, to investigation that has not examined the millionth part of its subject, or to conjecture that lives only through the day ? Caution on such topics, too, is much more important now than in other times. Shallow knowledge is the temptation of the hour ; and the continent swarms with the plague of those “ minute philosophers,” who pollute where they cannot sting, and think nothing worthy of their powers below the fabrication of governments and worlds.

But the geologist who calls himself a Christian should also recollect the express testimonial given to the Mosaic narrative, in the language of the Great Apostle :—“ *Through faith* we understand that the worlds were formed by the word of God, so that the things which are seen were not made of things that do appear<sup>1</sup> ;” a direct reference to a record of the Creation, as the subject of belief on Divine authority. But of the Creation there was only one great record in the hands of man—the Mosaic history ; and to this St. Paul refers, as

<sup>1</sup> Hebrews xi. 2.

established by inspiration, and, as such, claiming the same degree of perfect reliance with the promises and providence of Heaven<sup>1</sup>.

Professor Buckland's "Reliquiæ Diluvianæ" is employed to establish two points:—"That there has been a recent and general inundation of the globe;" and—"That the animals whose remains are found in the wreck of that inundation were natives of high northern latitudes, and not drifted to their present place from equatorial regions by the waters which caused their destruction." On the first, the Mosaic history agrees with the professor, though it may perfectly dispense with all the aid administered by the discovery of the cavern at Kirkdale. On the second, we may leave him to reconcile his conclusion with the whole array of his geological masters. But the more important object is, to exhibit, in the in-

<sup>1</sup> Professor Kidd remarks on the subject:—"From the *endless discordance* of philosophers on this point; from the manifest inadequacy of the data of which we are at present in possession; and from the *physical impossibilities* which must for ever be a bar to any thing more than a *superficial knowledge* of the Earth's structure;—it is preposterous to suppose that that high degree of moral evidence on which the credibility of Scripture rests, can, *with any justice, be weakened.*"

The whole question will be found, discussed with equal temper, learning, and sagacity, in Mr. Penn's "Comparative Estimate of the Mineral and Mosaical Geologies."

stance of an intelligent scholar and diligent inquirer into nature, the extraordinary hold which the passion for hypothesis lays upon the modern geologist. The simple facts are—that in a cavern at Kirkdale, in Yorkshire, the bones of twenty-three species of animals, from the elephant and rhinoceros to the rat and snipe, have been found, much crushed and comminuted. On this foundation is built the rapid consequence, that those animals must have been *natives* of Yorkshire for a series of years or ages; followed by the building of another, equally rapid, that the northern hemisphere *could not* have been the bed of the ocean at the time of the deluge. The process by which those objects are attained, is among the most resolute specimens of conjectural philosophy.

A quantity of crushed bones are found,—*Therefore*, they must have been crushed by *the teeth of animals*.

Hyænas' bones are found among them, and hyænas are known feeders on bones,—*Therefore*, they must have been crushed by the *teeth of hyænas*.

But the entrance of the cavern is too small to have suffered it to be the haunt of the larger animals,—*Therefore*, the hyænas must have dragged in their skeletons, to eat them at their ease.

But hyænas could not be supposed to drag them from any great distance,—*Therefore*, they must have found them on the spot; and, *there-*

*fore*, Yorkshire was a great ante-diluvian forest, filled with elephants, tigers, hippopotami, &c. &c.

But the bones of the hyænas are as much broken as any of the rest.—*Therefore* the old hyænas must have died, and left their bones to be gnawed by the young.

But there are as many broken bones of the young hyænas as of the old.—This is no difficulty, *for* “*perhaps* hyænas occasionally eat each other.” *For*, a hyæna in a menagerie has been known to “nibble away its own toes;” one has gone further still, and devoured a piece of its own fore leg! and monkeys in confinement have been sometimes detected eating off their own tails!—*Therefore* the ante-diluvian hyænas (though neither caged nor chained, and with every bone of every beast of the forest for their food) *must* have eaten each other, and that, not toe or tail, but wholesale, to the amount of hundreds or thousands.

But many of the larger bones, and the solid extremities of the bones, have not been crushed.—This is no difficulty. They were *too large* for the teeth of the hyænas.

But a vast number of bones of the water rat, snipe, and other small animals, remain.—This too is no difficulty; and for the opposite reason: they were *too small*: the professor telling us, that, “in masticating the bones of those small animals with their coarse conical teeth, many bones and frag-

ments of bones would be pressed outwards through their lips, and fall *neglected* to the ground." Thus, whether the mesh be large or little, it equally answers the escape of the hypothesis.

But no complete skeleton of a hyæna, nor even a skull of one, has been found in the cavern.—Still the naturalist must not be left under the uneasy impression, that the last hyæna actu-ally devoured himself. No. When *he* found the Deluge coming, "he rushed out of the cavern, and made his way to the adjoining hills:" which, whether we take it as a historical or a geological fact, we must receive as a perfectly elucidatory account of a circumstance, which might have painfully involved the solidity of the whole system.

Still, the Professor, though he must have already satisfied his readers, loves to accumulate proofs; and acknowledging that "the bones of the hyænas are as much broken as those of the *animals which formed their prey*; and hence *we must infer*, that the carcasses of the hyænas themselves were eaten up by their survivors;" (thus proving his point by a *non sequitur* from premises *taken for granted*), he proceeds to evidence.—"Whether it be the habit of modern hyænas to devour those of their own species which die in the course of nature; or, under the pressure of hunger, to kill and eat the weaker of them, is a point on which it is not *easy to obtain positive evidence*." This is the first secure

step.—“ Mr. Brown, however, *asserts*, in his Journey to Darfur, ‘that *it is related* of the hyæna, that upon one of their number being wounded, his companions instantly tear him to pieces, and devour him.’” (The case of wounds from hunters, and hunger, at least, being equally inapplicable in the ante-diluvian cavern.) This is the second *secure* step. “ It seems, *therefore*,” says the Professor, “ in the *highest degree probable*, that the mangled relics of hundreds of hyænas, which lie indiscriminately scattered and equally broken with the bones of other animals in the cave of Kirkdale, were reduced to this state by the surviving individuals of their own species.” Thus, out of the “ difficulty of obtaining positive evidence” (in other words, any thing meriting the name of evidence) and the—“ *it is related*” of Mr. Brown (in other words, a *rumour* in a traveller’s ears) is constructed the *highest degree of probability*! which, for all practical purposes, is certainty.

But fresh authority is given. “ The present Cape hyæna,” says a letter from a Mr. Underwood in Paris; “ about ten years ago, in the month of September, began to nibble and suck his hinder paws, which nearly destroyed them in two months; at which time he left off. At the same period of the following year he began again, and continued for about the same space of time, by which the metatarsal and tarsal bones of both

feet, and about half the tibia and fibula of the right leg were eaten ; since that time he has not attacked any other part of his body. He now walks on three legs, but with great difficulty.”—“ The fact seems to be,” adds the Professor, gravely, “ that *many animals*, particularly the monkey tribe, when in confinement,” are subject to diseases which induce them to nibble away their extremities. And thus, it is from the animal in a diseased state, and in the inaction and misery of a menagerie, that we are to reason to the habits of the creature, in its forest, and in the enjoyment of its native air and food. We might as well reason from the flanneled foot and crutch of a city epicure, to the springy step of a mountaineer. Hyænas in a tropical forest have other occupations than biting off their own metatarsal bones ; whatever they may do in the agony of pain brought on by being shut up for years in those places, where cruelty and curiosity go so much hand in hand, and where wretched animals, which we have no more right to torture than we have to torture each other—the free creatures of the desert, to which air and motion are existence and delight—are kept chained and cramped for the benefit of holiday gazers (for the true naturalist disdains this royal road to science), and waste away, till they die.

But what can be more trifling, rash, and unphilosophical, than any science which attempts

to establish itself on such grounds. That the Professor would be among the first to denounce his own induction on any other subject, it is due to his education to believe. The snare is in his Science. The necessity of being hypothetical is forced upon the geologist, by a pursuit which supplies nothing but hypothesis. He builds his house on the sand, because there is nothing to build on but the sand.

Yet even among hypotheses there is a choice. A much more probable mode of accounting for the deposit of the bones at Kirkdale would be, that they were the reliques of the animals of some great southern tract, thrown back by the reflux of the ocean to the north; as we see the plants and seeds of the south and west now carried to the east, from which the gulf stream originally flows. But the Professor's hypothesis, by concluding that the northern regions of Europe have been dry land, antecedently to the Deluge; exposes itself, first to the formidable objection, that the infinite quantity of marine deposits *prove* the presence of the ocean (unless he throws off the Mosaic declarations altogether); and secondly, that to conceive the climate of Yorkshire tropical, we must conceive an extraordinary change in the condition of the entire globe. This he admits: "though, whether by a change in the inclination of the earth's axis, or the near approach of a comet, or any other cause or combination of



causes purely astronomical," he does not decide. This *difficile per difficilium*, is the customary reasoning of the Science. But a change in the obliquity of the ecliptic is pronounced, by the unanimous voice of Mathesis, to be altogether a chimera. Even the Professor's astronomy is not quite sound, in distinguishing between "the change of the inclination," and the effect of "the near approach of a comet," for the *only* presumed operation of the latter is to have produced the former, and thus the Deluge. And this is Philosophy and Geology !

## CHAPTER VI.

### PARADISE.

THE history of Man, in the primeval state, is brief, simple, and natural ; and has, therefore, been the subject of long cavil and various conjecture. Mysticism would have better suited the capricious imagination of his offspring. By some, the whole narrative is taken as a mere figurative representation<sup>1</sup>. By another class, as a philosophical enigma, concealing the origin of the material world<sup>2</sup>. By a third, as an oriental allegory, picturing the influence of good and ill on the heart ; the tree of life, piety ; the tree of knowledge, prudence ; the serpent, the allurements of the passions<sup>3</sup>. It would be only a waste of time to dwell on those conceptions. One answer comprehends the whole :—the evidence that the history, taken in its *most literal meaning*, is the narrative

<sup>1</sup> Dathè, Ver. Lat. Vet. Test. F. Amman. Summa Theolog.

<sup>2</sup> Bauer. Hermen. Sacr. ; with the crowd of Germans, Eichhorn, Lessing, Paulus, &c.

<sup>3</sup> Philo Jud. de Mundi Opif. ; Middleton, &c.

of a transaction suitable to the providence of God and to the nature of man.

A large portion of the Pentateuch is of an order incapable of being disputed<sup>1</sup>; consisting of statements authenticated by the whole subsequent existence of the Jewish nation; the history of their origin, progress, trials, conquests, and laws. The character of Moses himself contains the clearest internal evidence that his narrative is totally untouched by fiction; no man can more candidly relate his own errors, or those of his countrymen. But his selection as the express instrument of Providence; and his high offices, as the direct transmitter of the Divine will, as the governor of the chosen people, and as the human giver of the national law, imply the virtue that must have precluded fiction, the

<sup>1</sup> To establish the claim of inspiration for the Pentateuch, it is by no means necessary to prove that it was written without the aid of earlier records. The inspiration might be fully shown in the peculiar use of those records. Thus, there can be no doubt that some of the Evangelists had seen the Gospel history in writing, before transmitting their own statements; yet no Christian can doubt their inspiration. The sincere historian of the Pentateuch seems even to state that he made use of such records. His fifth chapter gives "*The book of the generations of Adam*," the common scriptural expression for an acknowledged authority; and thence proceeds to a detail of names and years, which bears upon it the stamp of an ancient and authentic register. The Germans, however, (Eichhorn, *Enleitung*. Bauer, Hermen :) as usual, attempt to refine upon this, and in their clumsy dexterity affect to discover traces of various styles, interpolations, &c.

sagacity that was not to be deceived by fiction, and the dignity of mind that would have disdained to borrow fiction from the fantasies of the idolater.

To the allegorists, the answer has been justly given, that the whole must be allegorical, or the whole literal. "If the formation of the woman from the man be allegorical, the woman is an allegorical woman. The man must also be an allegorical man; for of such a man only the allegorical woman will be a fit companion. If the man is allegorical, his paradise will be an allegorical garden. Thus we may ascend to the beginning of creation, and have allegorical heavens, and an allegorical earth; and in this absurdity the scheme of allegorizing ends<sup>1</sup>." Some of our later Divines<sup>2</sup>, of whose motives it is impossible to speak but with respect, are inclined to look upon the narrative as altogether a *sacred mystery*, and therefore to be left among the untouched secrets of Providence. Yet it may be shown, that elevated as are the persons and objects, the transaction itself is *not* mysterious, that its progress is perfectly consistent with the

<sup>1</sup> Horsley, Biblical Crit. vol. i.

<sup>2</sup> Bishop Horsley; Dr. Shuttleworth, "Consistency of Revelation."

The authorities on the *reality* of the Fall occupy a large space in the works of the Fathers. See the Collections of Suicer, in his *Thesaurus*. It is additionally referred to by Cyril, Theophilus, Eusebius, Irenæus, Tertullian, Lactantius, &c.—(*Note from Holden.*)

common rules of the Divine government, is equally consistent with the declared plan of revelation, and is further confirmed by signal correspondences with some of the most remarkable events of history.

The outline of Creation having been given in the first and second chapters of Genesis, the third proceeds to detail the formation and original state of the human race. Adam, formed of the clay, animated by the breath of Deity, and thus become a "living soul," was immediately transferred to the garden in Eden. While man was made to live by food, and yet was not permitted to use the food supplied by animals, no location could have been more appropriate for enjoyment, health, and the exercise of his faculties.

But Eden contained a provision for a higher purpose. Man had a *moral* nature; he was a subject of Heaven. It was essential that he should be made sensible of the duty of constant obedience. Perhaps a more perplexing question could not be proposed to human thought, than the means by which a sense of the Divine authority might be kept constantly, yet naturally, before the mind. If a strong display of Divine power had been made to the immature mind of man, it might have utterly extinguished freewill in terror; if a strong display of future reward, it might have led the mind too much beyond the world in which its duties lay; besides establishing,

as in the case of terror, a motive inconsistent with freedom, and a motive too not of the highest order.

Instead of either, the means actually appointed were simple, offering no peculiar stimulant to his propensities, bodily or mental, and yet adequate to the purpose of constantly reminding him of his moral obligation. “Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat, but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil thou shalt not eat; for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die<sup>1</sup>.”

<sup>1</sup> *Thou shalt surely die.*—This sentence was *not executed*, because the sentence itself was *changed* by the new covenant; otherwise we have no reason to doubt that Adam, instead of having his life prolonged to nearly a thousand years, would have *instantly ceased to be*. And his promise of posterity would have been extinguished with himself, for it was not till after the expulsion from Paradise that his first offspring was born, (which puts an end to the usual queries, what would have been the state of the human race if Christ had not died? They would not have existed.) Annihilation must have been the natural punishment of Adam, for that is the natural impression of death, unless where a Divine declaration was made to the contrary. If the declaration of a future state were not required, why should it be so largely made to the Christian? But it may be objected, that this puts the Christian in a worse condition than the first sinner. Undoubtedly it does, if he falls; for there can be no question that the future suffering of the soul is worse than annihilation, a punishment which exists only in prospect, and whose suffering is at an end the moment it is inflicted. But this is the course of nature, which is but another name for the course of justice. The rewards of the Christian, if he stands, are incalculably higher;

We have no reason to suppose that this tree possessed any attraction for the eye or the taste beyond the others of the garden ; for even in the hour of the temptation, we are told no more than that it was good for food, and pleasant to the eyes, a character attributed to all<sup>1</sup>. This tree was planted in a conspicuous place—"the tree of knowledge in the *midst* of the garden ;" and this memorial Adam could never pass, without the recollection that it was the direct object of a Divine command ; a recollection involving others of the highest value—the existence of the great Being who had given the command—the Divine bounty in giving himself existence—his daily dependence on the Divine power—the Divine promise of perpetual life on the condition of his obedience—and the Divine menace of instant death in the event of his disobedience.

But why expose him to the chance of offending ? This question refers not to the ways of Providence, but to the constitution of human nature. It virtually asks, Why has man been so formed, that trial is his only avenue to triumph ; that moral

and in all instances he has a divine help, a divine example, and a divine atonement, if he will not sullenly reject them. With the higher reward is always connected the higher responsibility ; with the rejection of the more powerful and easier aid, is always connected the greater crime. (Law. Nature of Death—Athanas. de Incarn.—Taylor's Scrip. Divin. c. 9.)

<sup>1</sup> Gen. ii. 9.

exercise is the only source of moral vigour ; the natural and healthy regimen by which the higher portion of our being is wrought into systematic force and habitual activity ? But it goes further still : for, extinguish trial, and in the present constitution of the spirit of man, the direct result would be the extinction of almost the entire of human *happiness*. Beyond the mere indulgences of appetite, all that we can pronounce a pleasure is bound up with the consciousness of our having a difficulty to overcome, and of our overcoming it. All that we term rectitude, generosity, honour, principle, self-control, dignity of mind, the whole constituency of virtue, are born of this trial. Human life cannot administer a higher delight to the heart, than the conviction that we have proved our firmness by the performance of our duty ; and the delight is always proportioned to the arduous nature of the task. Armed with this conviction, man can defy the world, rejoice in the lowest humiliations of fortune, and from the dungeon or the scaffold triumph over the persecutor. Stripped of this conviction, life is tasteless ; the consciousness of timidity and tergiversation haunts the most glittering paths of fortune ; the simple sense of having yielded, where it was honour and virtue to have stood, throws a shade over the strongest sunshine of the world's prosperity, and turns the prizes of life into dust and ashes.

Thus the appointment of a difficulty, even in



the original state, was so far from being a mere arbitrary act of the Divine will, that it was only a more determinate provision for human happiness; a trial, to withhold which would have at once limited man's pleasures to those of the brute, and totally stopped his progress to perfection.

And the mode of sustaining this most essential idea was equally consistent with the Divine benevolence. It might have been left to reflection; but reflection is slow, uncertain, and obscure. It might have been fixed in some complicated ceremonial, or connected with some mysterious doctrine, or been the object of a long succession of trials: for something like all those has been the proceeding of the Deity in after times. But in the first instance, HE condescended to the inexperience of the human mind, by placing before it the command embodied in a visible shape; the whole law of obedience concentrated in the simple abstinence from a simple object of sense; and that object one offering no peculiar temptation, amid the general richness and beauty of nature.

The cause being once conceived, why a visible object was chosen; the question, why that object was a fruit, is scarcely worth pursuing. It has been justly observed, that the solitary state of man prohibited the majority of human offences. They belong to society. Adam's power of transgression was narrowed, as no man's has ever been since. The whole Table of the Law, which prohibits injuries to our neighbour, was to him a

non-existence. His only offence could be against Heaven; a breach of that Divine command, which might have been equally annexed to any production of nature.

Another stage in his progress now commenced. He was to become the progenitor of the human race. "And God said, It is not good that man should be alone. I will make him a help meet for him." The habitual process of Providence—to make every want of man an impulse to his heart or his understanding, was strikingly adopted in this instance. His new companionship was not to be given, until his reason had acknowledged its necessity. All the animals of Paradise, including probably the more important and beautiful species in existence<sup>1</sup>, were brought, by the Divine command, before him, that he might form some general conception of their natures, and give them names from his impressions. The result, supplying the complete evidence that companionship for man was not to be found among them, was followed by the formation of Eve.

Some interesting discussion has been raised upon the light which this naming of the animals may have thrown on the origin of language. It has been termed the first lesson<sup>2</sup>. Yet nothing can be clearer than that language never could

<sup>1</sup> Bochart. Hieroz. p. 1.—Dathe in Gen. 2.—Lardner, Essay, vol. v.

<sup>2</sup> The late Archbishop Magee, in his work on the Atonement, (No. 53), incautiously advocates this conjecture.

have been acquired by the mere act of naming. The faculty must be possessed before it can be thus exerted. The peculiar words might have been, of course, acquired, by hearing them first pronounced by the Deity. But this is not the statement of the history. Adam spontaneously invents and applies : but the whole conception, that this was the first lesson of language, must be given up, when we recollect that a Divine communication *in words* had already taken place. “ God hath said, Ye shall not eat of it,” (the tree of knowledge) <sup>1</sup>. To comprehend words, implies, in some degree, the power of using them ; and this power, which there was no time to teach, and no opportunity to learn, (for this was but the first day of human existence,) must have been given as a natural faculty to man. On this day also, Adam uttered the prophecy on the formation of woman,—a rapidity of acquirement totally inconceivable on human grounds.

Yet it is not necessary to conceive that language attained its perfection at once—for that perfection depends on its abundance of the names of things, its dexterity, force, and elegance, qualities which must await their natural growth by the cultivation of society. The original faculty was the power of adapting words to the wants of the time, the gift of *construction* ; an universal gift, yet a most re

<sup>1</sup> Gen. iii. 3.

markable one. The grammar of a new language is proverbially one of the most repulsive studies. The formation of a new language by an *individual*, of whatever accomplishment of mind, would be a labour of the severest difficulty : yet it is the every-day work of savages. If we are to believe in the human invention of language ; the Negro, the Esquimaux, the American Indian, fabricate their own grammars, and throw the philosopher into the shade. A solitary savage would not invent a language, and might even lose the language which he possessed ; because speech is necessary only for communication : but *two* savages would not be a week together without a language. The words might be few, but the construction would be ready : an attainment, for which, as study must be out of the question, we can look only to the instincts of the human mind.

The true companionship of man was now to be supplied ; and Eve was formed, of the flesh and blood of Adam.

The narrative announces a miracle ; but all the circumstances retain the habitual suitableness of the Divine action to the course of nature. If it were the sole purpose of the Creator to convince man that the new being was fitted for his companionship by partaking of the same species, and thus at once to establish its equality, and entitle it to his affection ; what expedient can the mind

conceive, more directly adequate to this purpose, than the evidence that woman was actually a portion of his frame? Eve might, with equal ease, have been formed of the dust,—or summoned into existence at the same moment with himself,—or created out of nothing,—or brought visibly from another sphere. Still, in all those cases, there would have been a deficiency of union, an inferiority to that incontrovertible evidence of relationship and almost identity, which arose from her being made of his flesh and blood, and being seen to be so made. Woman, thus formed, must have been instinctively acknowledged as the *second self* of man. And that the purpose was a connexion of no less completeness, is the language of Adam, speaking by the direct dictate of Heaven, and prophesying of that state of society, of which he could have known nothing but by inspiration: “This is now bone of my bone, and flesh of my flesh<sup>1</sup>. She shall be called Woman<sup>2</sup>; because she was taken out of man.

<sup>1</sup> Some long but trifling disquisitions have been raised even upon this subject. It has been said that the צֶלֶע, the rib, implied the whole side: the Septuagint translates it *πλευρα*, Vulg. Costa. that the frame of man is not deficient by a rib, &c. But the plain meaning of the original word is that given in the common translation; its origin is the radical צֶלַע, *incurvus fuit*. Hackspan. Notæ.—Schleusn. lxx.

<sup>2</sup> The original name is expressive of this assimilation of nature. She shall be called אִשָּׁה (*aisha*), from man, who was called אָדָם, from אִישׁ, to be vivid, active, &c.

*Therefore* shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife, and they shall be one flesh." A declaration which our Lord has proclaimed to be a law of God.

The first pair being formed, God declared to both, their purposes, their power, and their enjoyments, all comprehended in one great benediction: "And God blessed them; and God said unto them, Be fruitful and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it. And have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowls of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth. And God said, Behold I have given you every herb bearing seed, which is upon the face of all the earth; and every tree, in which is the fruit of a tree yielding seed; to you it shall be for meat<sup>1</sup>."

<sup>1</sup> Gen. ii. 28, &c.

## CHAPTER VII.

### THE FALL.

THE period during which Adam continued in Paradise, is beyond human knowledge: the history is silent. Some writers suppose that the state of innocence lasted a hundred years, others but a week, others but a day. Both extremes may be in error. It is improbable that the longer period should have been suffered to intervene between the blessing of "increase" and its fulfilment. Yet the history declares, that it was not until after the expulsion from Paradise that Cain was born.

On the other hand, Providence seldom precipitates its work. It is not inconsistent with the history, and it is perfectly consistent with nature, to suppose that the first pair were allowed some sufficient period to acquire a knowledge of the wonders so profusely spread round them, of the beneficence of the Creator, and, by practical conviction, of the happiness of a life of innocence. Who shall say how magnificently their solitude

might not have been cheered and peopled by the spirits of heaven? They had the presence of the Creator ; the source of incomparable light, knowledge and happiness. Thus living in the untroubled joy of children, they may have been left in some degree to that gradual operation of nature by which maturity of mind and body is the result of time.

But the severer period was at hand. Under the present constitution of the moral world, virtue *cannot* exist, but where a power of choosing between good and evil exists ; virtue itself being scarcely more than the determination by which we reject the evil, and adopt the good<sup>1</sup>. This is universal experience. Every man feels that he has it in his *power* to transgress. His refusal to exert this power, on principle, is virtue ; and his merit rises with the exact degree of his temptation. Thus, that Adam should undergo the test, was strictly in the course of nature, as we see it at this hour.

But, in his trial there was another striking similarity to our common experience. In nearly all nations, if not in all, there has been an established test of individual fitness for the general offices of society ; and this has been always fixed at the period when the individual, ceasing to be under the care of others, has arrived at manhood.

<sup>1</sup> Virtue, or moral rectitude, does indeed consist in affection to, and pursuit of, what is right and good.—*Butler, Analogy.*



Among the nations of the ancient world, the test was chiefly the exhibition of personal prowess ; among the savage tribes of the present day, it is patience under pain and privation : in all instances it has applied to the qualities most important to the individual as a *member of the community*. Among ourselves, where bodily distinctions are of less value, the semblance of the test is retained in those legal formalities by which the heir is acknowledged to be intellectually capable of his heirship. An observance so universal seems to be little less than a dictate of nature.

With Adam the period had arrived, when he was to commence the actual sovereignty, included in the parentage, of mankind. No time appears more suitable for the evidence that he possessed the moral qualities which were to be so importantly employed. This test has been named the temptation. “ Let no man say that he is tempted of God,” is the language of Scripture ; it is no less the language of reason. It is utterly impossible to conceive that the God of all purity and benevolence can prompt the evil of his creatures. But it may be among the high displays of his beneficence to *try* their qualities, for the purpose of purifying and invigorating them, if they stand the test. In our limited knowledge of the moral system, it even seems not improbable that this is the *only* way in which they can be strengthened, without a miracle. And for this purpose He may

justly use the means offered by circumstances. The evil spirit, in the gratification of his own malignity, sought the overthrow of the first man, as he does of all his offspring. Satan can do nothing but by sufferance. God *suffered* the malignity of satan, to try the firmness of Adam, as he afterwards suffered him to try the patience of Job, and the fidelity of Peter. “Satan hath desired to have thee, that he might sift thee as wheat,” is our Lord’s declaration to the apostle Peter, who failed under the trial, and was restored only by the mercy of his master. Thus the temptation of Adam was similar in its chief instrument to the subsequent temptations of the saints; and so far as the experience of the Christian can be a guide, the same struggle is still maintained, the trial permitted by the same sufferance, and the ruin averted by the same vigilant mercy.

It has been asked, why should Satan exhibit this furious hatred against man? Why should this powerful spirit be distinguished by so desperate and boundless a determination against the welfare of beings, but just brought into existence; innocent, and totally incapable of provoking hostility? Why should he persevere, when his own sagacity must dictate to him his helplessness against the final purposes of heaven; and when his own experience must have taught him the terrors of the Divine indignation? Those questions have been needlessly perplexed, by attempts

to discover their answers among the mysteries of the Divine decrees, of which we can know nothing ; among the habits of the spiritual world, of which we can know no more ; and even among the Rabbinical traditions, of all fables the most trifling. Yet, confessedly remote as the subject is, the conduct of the evil spirit is plainly comprehensible on the common grounds of nature. That a detected criminal should feel enmity to his detector and punisher ; and that his enmity should be bitter in proportion to the rank from which the punishment had degraded him, the keenness of the punishment, and the hopelessness of restoration, is perfectly analogous to all human nature. It is thus perfectly in the course of things, that a rebel spirit, holding the rank of a prince among angels, and probably approaching in power, as we may well conceive from its fearful extent even in his fallen state, as near as the creature can approach to the Creator ; yet, flung from his splendid height, ruined in the sight of the hosts of heaven, and driven into exile for ever, might be stimulated by an indescribable intensity of revenge. Time too has its effect in deepening the perversion of the heart. What might not be the capacity of a thousand, or ten thousand, years of bitter thoughts and baffled hatred, working on a mind of the highest intellectual vigour, and the keenest and most comprehensive impulses, to envenom its whole being into sleepless, desperate, and deadly hos-

tility? Conscious that his Sovereign was totally inaccessible, he would wreak his revenge on his favourite works; and pursue this headlong career, even in the fullest knowledge that he was heaping dreadful retribution on his own head. For, what is the course of human nature, in its perversion; which is but a nearer approach to the satanic<sup>1</sup>?

When revenge, of all the evil passions the most absorbing, obtains the complete mastery of man, all other considerations vanish before it; love, honour, faith, even self-interest, and life, are nothing in the scale. It usurps his whole being; it is all but an actual possession. All fear is lost, with all feeling. He knows that the gratification of his terrible impulse will draw down upon him the weight of the law; he scoffs at punishment;—that it will drive him from society, or from existence; he faces ruin with his eyes open. In countries where human malignity is more licenced by the weakness of the government or the habits of the people, than in ours, he is only more palpably a wild beast, or a fiend. He toils for years on the single purpose, the destruction of his

<sup>1</sup> The works upon the existence and nature of Spirits are endless. The chief are Cassman, *Angelographia*. Ode de Angelis. Mayer, *Hist. Diaboli*. Morus. *Epit. Theol. C.* Windet de *Vita Functorum*. Spencer, de *Leg. L. 3.* Mede, *D. 4.* Gill, *Body of Divin. v. i.* Dœderlein, *Inst. Theol. C.* and the very curious, wild, and learned book by Rusca; *De Inferno et Statu Dæmonum*.

enemy ; he calumniates and betrays, until he can stab or poison ; he is not content with the blood, he rends and tramples upon the carcase. If he is at last seized by the slack hand of foreign justice, he defies its inflictions ; or even extracts a gloomy joy from the severity of the price which he has paid for his revenge. He dies, with the world past, and the world to come, equally shut out by the one paramount idea :—he has had his revenge !

If such be the force of the passion, on so brief a scale as the heart and irritations of man ; what may be its tempest in beings, all whose passions, like their powers, must be immeasurably more sensitive, and capacious of evil ; who see far into futurity, and see nothing there but evil,—sons of the morning, ruined—monarchs, fallen from thrones of light, into chains irredeemable,—heirs of glory, darkened for ever ?

The whole procedure of Satan, in betraying our first parents, is equally true to nature. Woman, though often exhibiting force of mind, is characterized by the predominance of the gentler faculties, and by an excitable fancy. Those are the qualities fitted for her office in society, and their exchange for the severer powers of man would only render her less useful and less loved. But man, too, has his feelings ; and where the strength of his understanding would repel the danger, he may be undone by indolent incaution, by the

force of example, or by that powerful sympathy which plunges into ruin for the sake of its associate in passion and in shame.

Thus the first effort of the Tempter is addressed to Eve. His approach is made in the unsuspecting manner of a question of mere curiosity, possibly mingled with some apparent degree of interest in the lovely and innocent being before him. There seems even to be something of a gentle taunt, or slight summons to vanity, in the question<sup>1</sup>, “Yea! hath God said, Ye shall not eat of *every tree* of the garden?” Can it be, that you, the acknowledged possessors of Paradise, are yet liable to restrictions on its enjoyment?—Eve’s answer is not unlike a vindication of the completeness of the right. She first asserts the full possession of the produce of Paradise:—“We may eat of the trees of the garden.” And then states the single prohibition and the penalty. The mention of the penalty gives the Tempter an additional topic; of which he takes instant advantage.

From covertly questioning the generosity of the Creator, he now openly contests his truth:—“Ye *shall not* surely die.” He goes further still, and adds, that not merely a deception has been practised, but that it has been practised for the purpose of defrauding the human race of a high and natural accession of knowledge, dignity, and happiness.

<sup>1</sup> In the Septuagint it is, “Τί! οὐκ ἔφηεν ὁ Θεός?” What! hath God said, &c.

“ God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, then shall your eyes be opened ; and ye *shall be as Gods*, knowing good and evil.”

The *name* of the tree had been given by the Deity himself ; and, that some striking influx of knowledge or additional strength of faculties was connected, by some mysterious link, with the fruit, might have been already a human conception. The Tempter adopts the name, and perverts it into temptation. It is curious, that this artifice exhibits the character which, whether from the inspired writings, or from other sources, has always been ascribed to the delusions of the evil spirit,—a mixture of seeming truth with falsehood, the “ keeping the word of promise to the ear, and breaking it to the hope.” “ Ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil,” possessed exactly that portion of truth which was sufficient to envenom the discovery of ruin.

It has been objected, that temptation by a fruit was trivial ; and such it would undoubtedly be, if the pleasures of the eye or the appetite were the sole inducement. But the true temptation, and the only temptation which the serpent pronounced, was, “ Ye shall be *as gods*.” And what loftier illusion could be offered to the human mind ? The forms assumed by the spirits of heaven, on their missions to the earth, were probably often visible to our first parents, as they subsequently were to a race of inferior dignity, the

patriarchal line. But they had seen a Being infinitely higher than all angels—the Creator. What magnificent temptation was not couched in the hope to be the equal of that Being; to seize, at a single effort, an immunity from the chances of life, and a complete possession of the glories of the future; to be, at once, supreme in wisdom, matchless in power, and unlimited in existence. All were in the words, “Ye shall be as gods’.”

The only difficulty is, how so high a suggestion could have been believed? Yet we must acknowledge the singular readiness of the human heart to believe all that it wishes to be true; the fatal facility with which it suffers the allurements to shut the penalty out of sight; and the magnitude assumed by the most insignificant object, seen through the haze of the passions. Man, every day, sacrifices the most important interests

<sup>1</sup> That Satan was the actual deceiver, is the universal testimony of Scripture. He is pronounced “a murderer from the beginning,”—from the first, a cause of death to man. (John viii. 4.) The atonement, given for the acknowledged purpose of retrieving the *effects of the fall*, is declared to be for the purpose of “destroying the works of the Devil.” (1 John iii. 8.) It was prophesied that between the seed of the woman and the seed of the serpent there should be enmity. Our Lord directly applies the prophecy to the Pharisees, who, after exhibiting the most inveterate hostility to his mission, finally persecuted him to the cross. He names the Jewish Scribes the seed of the old serpent; and gives, as the equivalent name, the “sons of their father, the Devil.”



of his being, to objects that scandalize his understanding.

The actual form under which the Tempter appeared to Eve, has given rise to a singular quantity of unimportant disquisition. By some, the serpent has been supposed a superior species of reptile, with wings; by others, an ouran-outang; by others, a basilisk, &c.<sup>1</sup> But those are learned triflings, and arise from a neglect of the literal narrative, or an ambition to be wiser than Scripture. The narrative alone is clear and natural: it states that, among the inferior animals, there was one race which stood at their head for *intelligence*,—the נחש, the serpent, “more subtle than *any other beast of the field*.” We know how closely the intelligence of some of the beasts of the field approaches to the human faculties. The half reasoning elephant, the dog, and the ape, often astonish us by the evidence of their sagacity; but it is declared that the serpent once possessed this sagacity in a still *higher degree* than any other of the brute species. It is perfectly possible to conceive a rate of intelligence midway between the elephant and man. From our habits, and from our possessing the sole use of words, we too hastily conclude that intellect forms the essential

<sup>1</sup> Tenison on Idolatry. Mayer, Hist. Diaboli. Maimonides. M. Nevoch, &c.

distinction between man and the brute. The moral capacity is the essential distinction. The intellectual line varies widely, and, in some instances, presses close. Neither the form nor the faculties of the existing serpent correspond to the description in the text. The subtilty and the speech are there declared to have belonged to an animal possessing nothing in common with it, but the name. The serpent of Paradise was *not* a *reptile*, but a *beast of the field*, biped, or quadruped.

The objections to the utterance of speech by this animal are trivial. Speech depends upon two things, and upon two alone,—intelligence and the physical organs. The intelligence of the elephant or the dog might often bear transplanting into speech; and we often so transplant it, when we speak of their docility and their affections. But they want the physical organs, which give the speech of man its readiness, copiousness, and accuracy. Yet all animals, almost down to the zoophyte, have the power of expressing their wants and purposes by sounds; some of them by sounds so varied and so exact, that we can interpret them as the language of fear, hunger, joy, pain, rage, &c. They have, thus far, attained a speech; a rude and limited instrument, it is true, compared with that of man, but an instrument of the same kind: for speech, in its highest state, is only a more dexterous and abundant use of sounds. Yet even the physical organs are sometimes

given. Would the man who had never seen a parrot, be entitled to assume the impossibility of a bird's possessing the articulation of the human voice?

Nothing is more easily conceivable than the existence of a creature possessing the organs of articulation in at least as high a degree as the parrot, with intelligence in at least as high a degree as the dog or the elephant. It is equally conceivable that such a creature, probably beautiful, and submissive, as all animals then were<sup>1</sup>, might be an object of familiarity and interest with our first parents, as it would undoubtedly be with ourselves ; and that Eve might have found it sporting at the foot of the tree of knowledge, without experiencing any of that alarm which puts the mind on its guard.

To get rid of the presumed difficulty of temptation by so simple an instrument, writers of considerable name have exercised their invention with laborious and useless variety. It has been thus successively conceived<sup>2</sup> :—That Satan came as an angel,—as a man,—as a fiery serpent,—as an ape, &c. &c. His proceeding is equally controverted. Some think that the serpent spoke by a voice suddenly given by Satan ; others, that

<sup>1</sup> Joseph. Antiquit. Lib. 1.

<sup>2</sup> Tenison, C. 14. Heidigger Hist. Patriar. Ex. 4. Odè Comm. de Angelis. C. 3. Markius, Hist. Parad. &c.

he did not speak, and that the whole description of the dialogue refers merely to the fluctuations of the mind of Eve ; others, that the serpent both spoke and acted,—climbing the tree, tasting the fruit, and giving its marvellous effect upon himself as a proof of its virtues. Our refuge from those learned inconsistencies, must be in the simplicity of the original record. If the Tempter had come as an angel, his presence might have been more overpowering ; but his very splendour, combined with his formal contradiction of Divine authority, might have awakened alarm. If as a man, the knowledge that Adam alone existed under that form must have been a source of suspicion. The sudden and the splendid were equally startling. Further conceptions are pressed with similar difficulties. The literal narrative alone offers to us an object clear of all suspicion,—an innocent and familiar animal, as incapable, in its own nature, of conceiving a design against man, as the dog that fawned at his feet, or the cattle that sported round him in the field. Whatever a creature of this kind, too, could communicate by its little faculties, would be looked on as less the result of intention than instinct, a spontaneous truth of nature. Even now, we are sometimes directed by the instincts of animals to the use or avoidance of peculiar products of the earth. But, who ever conceives a design of either good or evil in the guide ? The temptation was only an example of

this guidance, on a higher scale, suited to the superior, known intelligence of the animal.

The suggestion of the evil spirit coming in this totally unsuspecting shape, to Eve; and combining with the love, the vanity, and the pride, which might mingle in the hope of raising Adam and herself to the rank of celestial beings, might have acted strongly upon an unfortified mind. The fruit itself offered no warning repulsion to the eye or taste<sup>1</sup>. “And when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was pleasant to the eye, and a tree to be desired to *make one wise*, she took of the fruit, and did eat.” Naturally sharing

<sup>1</sup> The three doubtless joined their influence in the temptation. The indulgence of the eye, the indulgence of the taste, and the indulgence of vain glory, constitute the essence of all temptation to this hour. The text which enumerates the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eye, and the pride of life, (1 John ii. 16.) as the sources of human guilt, has been echoed alike by heathen philosophy and human experience. And this adds only to the proof, that the narrative of the original crime is consistent in all its features. Appetite, show, and the love of power, are still the great sources of crime; but the last still holds the supremacy, in its influence and its evil: as both an exciter of the more vigorous, and, consequently, of the more dangerous minds; and as exercising an illusion more allied to strength of character, more undecayed by years, and more dazzling to the man and to the multitude. Sensuality and vanity, brief in their existence, and feeble in their means, are toys, compared with the iron shackle which the love of power and name fixes on the mind, the age to which it endures, and the remorseless mischiefs which it inflicts upon mankind.

the delight of the discovery with Adam, “ she gave also to her husband with her, and he did eat.” Why the graver understanding of man thus rapidly yielded, is left to our conjecture ; but the power of beauty, of persuasion, of the pride of heart in defying all hazards for the object of the affections, and even of fear and anguish in the prospect of its loss, are influences which have made themselves felt in every age of human nature.

If such influences still retain their power, under all the chillness and worldliness wrought into the heart by the struggles of life ; what might not be the strength of passion and sorrow in the instance of the first man, on the point of being separated for ever from a creature formed in a perfection of beauty, of which earth has probably never seen the equal ; and allied to him as woman was never since allied to man ; a part of his nature, an actual portion of himself, corporeal and mental ; divinely affianced to him by a bond implying a complete communion in every sorrow, as well as joy, of his existence ?

The narrative is also perfectly consistent with the distinction of crime arising from the distinction of motive. Both criminals are alike exiled, and alike sentenced to the struggle with a sterile world ; but on Eve, as the more presumptuous offender, is inflicted the heavy punishment of pain in her child-bearing—an exclusive agony ; as

if the production of that offspring whose glory may have been among her strongest inducements to dare "to be as gods," should be a memorial of her guilt for ever. Her rashness, too, in relying on her own judgment, and thus assuming independence of her husband, seems to have been *peculiarly* the object of punishment, in the declaration that "he should rule over her." St. Paul marks distinctly, as a ground of the acknowledged dependence of woman, that "Adam was not the first deceived, but Eve <sup>1</sup>."

<sup>1</sup> 1 Tim. ii. 14.

## CHAPTER VIII.

### THE TREE OF KNOWLEDGE.

THIS subject has, like all the rest, perplexed the learning, or provoked the mysticism of interpretation ; yet on no topic of Scripture has there been a more remarkable disregard of the obvious rules of inquiry. By some commentators, the tree has been pronounced pregnant with all science ; by others a miraculous means of invigorating the human intellect ; by others a poison, naturally extinguishing life ; by others a sacrament, or visible sign of some influence, to be developed in that higher world of which Eden itself is the representative.

The state of Adam before the Fall is perfectly conceivable, as affording no opportunity for practically learning the distinction of virtue and vice<sup>1</sup>.

<sup>1</sup> In Scripture, the "knowledge of good and evil" is universally a knowledge of the *distinction* between virtue and vice. Thus, "Your little ones, which ye said should become a prey, and your children which in that day had *no knowledge of good and evil*, (infants, too young to know the difference,) shall go



His nature was created pure. The promptings of sin, familiar as they are to our fallen nature almost from the dawn of the human powers, could not have been *spontaneously* generated in his mind. The trial of his moral capacity was to come; but until it came, and by an *external* influence, he fell, there was nothing in his condition to invalidate the idea that his will, his understanding, and his senses, existed in the guileless purity that is unconscious of the very existence of sin.

The *moral sense* had existed before; for it was to this sense alone that the command to abstain from the tree of knowledge, and the threat of penalty, could have been addressed. But it was the first act of disobedience alone that taught the mind the practical distinction between vice and virtue. It was then fearfully felt in the influx of remorse, conscious ingratitude, and the terror of impending

in thither," is the language of Moses to the rebellious Israelites in the wilderness. (Deut. i. 30.) Isaiah, in describing the innocent ignorance of extreme childhood, says, "Before the child shall know to *refuse the evil and choose the good*," (before he is capable of making the distinction,) the events predicted shall appear. St. Paul defines the more experienced among the converts, as "those who have their senses exercised to *discern both good and evil*." (Heb. v. 14.) In any other sense the expression is inapplicable to Adam, for no knowledge of *good* was gained by the transgression; the only knowledge was of *evil*. Milton's expression, "knowledge of evil gained and good lost," describes the *fact*; but the phrase in the original is content with expressing the *distinction*.

destruction. The contrast and the pain are still, in a qualified degree, constantly occurring among mankind. It is equally consistent with human experience, that the pain of the discovery should not have been left to mere reflection; but that the crime should, in some measure, ensure its own punishment. Thus, the eating of the fruit is distinctly declared to have produced a real change in human sensation; which, whether a sudden sense of impetuous blood, or a general fever of the faculties, or an agonizing pang of conscience and shame, was felt by the offenders as the beginning of vengeance.

The progress of the narrative sustains the same consistency with common nature. The first act of the criminal is generally to deny all consciousness of crime; the second, to throw the guilt on his associates. When the man and the woman are summoned before the Divine Judge, their first answer is an equivocation—"I heard thy voice in the garden, and was afraid, because I was naked<sup>1</sup>."

<sup>1</sup> It has been conceived, that notwithstanding the guilt of the first crime, it advanced the criminals to a more beneficial grade of moral knowledge, and that the discovery of the necessity of clothing was in itself a proof of a newly acquired sense of propriety. But against this stands the insurmountable objection, that God had *expressly prohibited* the act from which those advantages are supposed to flow. Doubtless He can extract good from evil by his own resistless interference, but good cannot flow from evil by the course of nature. That man, by his crime, acquired an accession of knowledge, is allowed; for every act of

On the detection of the subterfuge, all other feelings are lost in terror, a terror probably never equalled in the history of human agony, for what other human beings ever stood in the visible presence of an offended God? Adam then throws his guilt on Eve; Eve alike throws her guilt on the Tempter, "The serpent beguiled me, and I did eat." The Tempter is not questioned; his native iniquity is already known. Sentence is passed upon him first, and without mitigation; a twofold ruin. In his animal form he is degraded to the condition of a reptile, and of all reptiles, the most abhorred; in his spiritual nature he is destined to

guilt, as every act of human life, is an accession of knowledge, however ruinous. The man who proceeds from robbery to murder adds to his knowledge, but such knowledge is not an addition to his moral sensibility, but to the hardening of the heart; not a benefit, but an undoing.

It has been already shown that man possessed a *moral sense* from the beginning, implied in the command of obedience to a Divine restriction. The propriety of clothing for concealment was suggested by a sense of shame, but that sense of shame was suggested by a sense of sin; its non-adoption in the earlier state of Paradise was *not* the result of an insensibility to the dictates or delicacy of nature; for we cannot discover, on natural principles, why any one portion of the human frame should more require concealment than another. That a sense of the fitness of concealment now exists is of course acknowledged, but it is a sense altogether connected with the results of the original transgression, and arguing a change from the perfect purity of our first nature.

be overthrown by the descendant of the woman. This sentence *could not* have been directed to a mere *brute*;—because it is declared as a punishment for sin, of which the brute nature is *incapable*—because *enmity* is declared to subsist between the offspring of the woman and the offspring of the serpent, of which the brute nature could have no comprehension—and because *the* tempter, as distinguished from his offspring, is to war with a Being whose birth was still distant four thousand years: a circumstance obviously incompatible with animal life.

All the characteristics of the prediction too, are evidently pointed so as to baffle and mortify the pride of a malignant *spiritual* adversary. He has overcome by fraud, he is to be overcome by fortitude, not to be *beguiled*, but to be crushed in open combat; he has exulted in the ruin of the world, he is to be destroyed by a Being born of the world; he has made woman his first victim, and from woman, by an especial and exclusive birth, is to come the subverter of his power.

The severity of changing the serpent's form, was nothing, as an infliction on the mere brute. From all that we can discover of animal sensation, all the lower animals are equally happy. They have the full measure of enjoyment suited to their condition. The serpent creeping in the dust, is probably enjoying all the happiness that

it can conceive. We have not the slightest reason to doubt, that the animal mind has been lowered to the animal form.

The serpent race might have been extinguished at the moment of the crime ; as many of the antediluvian animals unquestionably have been in the Deluge ; and yet it might be of signal value to early, and to all, mankind, that so striking a remembrancer of that crime, and so striking an anticipation of the final vanquisher of the evil one, should be kept in existence ; that wherever, in field or forest, the tiller of the ground saw a serpent, he should see, in the degradation of a creature, once of such intelligence, gentleness, and beauty, into an object of such instinctive loathing, and mortal danger ; a living evidence of the guilt by which Paradise was lost to man<sup>1</sup>.

<sup>1</sup> Bishop Horsley, after Warburton, asks, "Why did not Moses say at once that the serpent was Satan?" and answers, that he *suppressed* the name through fear of encouraging the serpent worship then prevalent in the East. But this is rash dealing with Scripture. It takes for granted that the writer of the Pentateuch might insert or suppress whatever fact he pleased. In other words, that he might model the history according to his own conceptions. In this case what becomes of its inspiration?

A reason will be given, as the volume advances, why the *serpent alone* was spoken of—a reason referring to the general system of Revelation, and of which Moses uninspired could have known nothing ; yet the close adaptation of his history to which, shows that the writer must have been a passive instrument in a mightier hand.

## CHAPTER IX.

### THE TREE OF LIFE.

THAT the power of giving perpetual life should exist in the fruit of a tree<sup>1</sup>, has been made the subject of violent question. Yet, what does human science *prove* to the contrary? What is known of the *principle* of life? Nothing. And what can qualify this utter ignorance, to decide against the plain declaration of the record? or, are we not daily witnesses of powers in the vegetable world, only next in extent, and altogether as much out of the pale of human explanation? What might be the impressions made on an intelligent observer witnessing, *for the first time*, the action of some of the simplest products of the earth?

Let us conceive him present at a paroxysm of fever. He sees an agony of disease, the

<sup>1</sup> The learned Kennicott labours with great assiduity to escape the supposed difficulties of the "tree of life."—(*Two Dissertations*.) He applies the name to the whole class of trees, and concludes that their general use as food, was the source of the name. But this is incompatible with the fact that Adam had *not* eaten of the tree, and with his expulsion to prevent his eating of it. The conjecture is untenable.

countenance changed, the brain bewildered, the frame convulsed by preternatural force or worn by mortal exhaustion ; the man palpably sinking into the grave.—Then comes the all but miracle : a few scrapings of the rind of a tree are poured into the dying lips, and the disease flies ; life shoots again through the frame ; the possession of the faculties, the vigour of nerve and muscle, the living countenance, the composure of mind, all are there once more : the man is snatched from the tomb !

Or what could more amply justify the astonishment of such a spectator, than the common effects of the vegetable poisons ? Their sudden seizure of the very founts of life, and the subtilty and diversity of that seizure ; their unaccountable powers of alike dissolving and stagnating ; of scorching and chilling ; of stimulating and numbing ; their turning the blood alternately into ice, into water, into flame !

Or, passing from those fierce influences, (which yet, in a more advanced stage of science, will probably be found among the noblest repellants of disease) to the common stimulants ; how little could he expect to find, in the simple and singularly nutritious ear of corn, powers capable of subverting every habit, feeling, and faculty of man ; of infatuating the wise, inflaming the prudent, and degrading the whole manliness and dignity of our being into a mass of profligate imbecility.

Or, who that laid the seed-vessel of the poppy before him, could be heard, without a strong tinge of incredulity, in the assertion; that this weedy, and common encumbrance of the field possessed not merely the most singular mastery over the frame, the strangely antagonist powers of animating the nerves, and chaining them up in total insensibility, of soothing disease and extinguishing life; but, that it reached the finest recesses of the mind; alternately startling the imagination with shapes of terror, and filling the sleeping or the waking dream with a world of magnificent fiction.

But the frame which resists disease, yields to time. Old age comes; and the subject of all those influences and revivals goes down to the grave. Still, the powers of the vegetable world are not yet outstripped; the infusion of a common seed arrests nature, even in that process in which she is deemed most irresistible; says to decay, "Thus far shalt thou go, and no farther!" and holds every limb, feature, and fibre of the dead, in the completeness of the living form, for hundreds or for thousands of years!

Habit diminishes only unreasoning wonder. To the philosopher, the support of the human frame by food for a day, is as profound a problem as its support for a century, or for ever; it belongs to a chemistry which evades even conjecture; and leaves him, if he be a fool, to illumine his vanity by



some new light of scepticism ; or, if he be wise, to bow down with new reverence before the exhaustless wisdom of the Lord of nature. •

The words in which the sentence of exile was passed, appear to contain a mixture of that lofty scorn<sup>1</sup> which was due to baffled pride ; and of that compassionate wisdom which is a characteristic of the Deity. “ Behold, man is become as one of us, to know good and evil,” was originally the language, *not* of the Deity, but of the tempter. And its statement by the Judge *may* not imply more than the recapitulation of the crime from the tribunal ; it *cannot* imply that man had actually made an advance towards the nature of the Godhead, for the direct result was the actual degradation of his own. The sentence seems contemptuous, alike of the deceiver and of the deceived.—Behold, what man has obtained by the temptation of equalling God ! But mercy here intervenes ; and, for the purpose of preventing a new evil arising from a new exercise of his arrogance and presumption, he is to be removed from the tree of immortality. “ And now, lest he put forth his hand, and take *also* of the tree of life, and eat, and live for ever ;” “ *therefore* God sent them

<sup>1</sup> Glass. Philolog. Sac. 905.

forth." Those words, too, decide the contested question whether, if Adam, after his fall, had eaten of the tree, he would have become immortal. For, the avoidance of this result is the declared reason of his immediate exile. It distinctly implies that, if he had eaten, he *must* have lived for ever. Yet it is equally clear, that his removal was an act of mercy. In his fallen state an exemption from the grave could only have tremendously increased his penalty. How ruinous, for example, would be an assurance of interminable life, in our own vitiated state of society? For, what are the grand checks of public disorder at this hour, but the power of death in the hands of justice, and the power of death in the hands of nature? Without this final terror, and irresistible removal, law could do little, and time nothing. Or rather, time would aggravate the disorder; and instead of rendering the crime obsolete, or dissolving the criminal into dust; would swell the weight of general guilt by perpetual accumulation, and harden the individual aggressor by habit, by the continued indulgence of the passions, and by the subtilty, skill, and confidence, learned in the long career of evil.

It was a longevity, amounting in its own rude speculation, almost to immortality, which raised the tide of ante-diluvian vice beyond all that the earth has since seen. The life of a thousand years equally accounts for the character of the corrup-

tion. The earth was filled with *violence*, the natural result of savage strength and headlong passion, untamed by the fear, and unextinguished by the operation, of the grave. Yet, for the general longevity of the ante-diluvian world, a beneficent reason existed, in its absolute importance to the preservation of Divine knowledge in the line of Seth. If the line of Cain abused this provision for the perpetuity of the highest gift of heaven; their abuse was no ground for abridging its uses to a race, with whom length of life was length of wisdom. But, to shorten the existence of one portion of mankind, while the other continued in the possession of its original period, could have been the work only of miracle; and of miracle interposed merely for the protection of a race of criminals, against the consequences of their own iniquity.

Yet this length of life was found to be fatal, even to the virtue of the chosen line. The Sethites gradually sank into apostasy. One extraordinary effort of the Divine mercy was then levelled directly at the source of the evil. The duration of the living world was openly limited to a hundred and twenty years. But whatever might have been the immediate effect of this menace, it evidently did not long prevent the multitude from pursuing their habitual career. The true worshippers were finally reduced to the single family of the patriarch; and the deluge was the last and

terrible expedient against the corruptions of excessive longevity.

Still, the guilt or sufferings of the ante-diluvian world do not include the whole operation of the evil. The longest life there was determinate by the course of nature ; and its worst consequence, universal crime, was finally within the remedy of universal death. But what must be the supremacy of guilt and suffering, if death were impossible ? The deepest conceptions of horror cannot surpass the natural effects of this privilege of ruin. The elder generations would have rapidly constituted so irresistible a majority ; that their habits of ignorance, and indulgence, of ferocity and vice, must have totally and perpetually predominated over all beneficial change. All those hopes of improvement which rise with the rising age, must have been strangled in their birth by prejudices fixed by the obstinacy of years, and sustained at once by the weight of authority, and the force of multitude. Even the saliency of youth, in this universal corruption, would discover itself only in more extravagant excess. All would be one vast conspiracy against human happiness and the laws of Heaven.

But, one shape of physical evil, before which all others are phantoms, must have at length added horror to horror. A world in which none died, and into which millions were constantly born, must soon overflow with life. Every year must

have seen the human race crushed more and more against its boundaries ; until mankind was condensed into one mass of furious and famishing existence. The whole business of life must then become war for food. The world must be covered with unsatisfying rapine and fruitless bloodshed ; all the thoughts and means of man turned to the mere satisfying of hunger ; reason extinguished in the tortures of brute appetite ; the keenest agony of the necessities inflamed by the wildest frenzy of the passions ; earth an anticipated hell !

It has been asked, why had not Adam eaten of the tree of life during his early habitancy in the garden ; as the tree of knowledge alone was prohibited. It may be fairly answered, that the tree of life being given only as an antidote to death, and death being only the result of sin, Adam, in the first glow of life, sinless, and even unconscious of the existence of sin, would no more have thought of securing himself against its consequences, than a man of perfect virtue, if such were now to be found, would think of providing against public execution, or a man in the full vigour of health, of swallowing a specific against disease.

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The first pair were now to be exiled from Paradise. “ Lest the man put forth his hand and eat

and live for ever, *therefore* the Lord God sent him forth from the garden of Eden<sup>1</sup>." The literal narrative is more consistent than all the glosses. To prevent the presumptuous seizure of immortality, there was the choice of two expedients—the immediate extinction of the powers of the tree; or the immediate removal of the criminals. But the former would have been an interference with Nature—a miracle, which is never adopted without necessity. The latter was the simpler act, and it was the act done. No *new* process of decay is thenceforth announced. The human frame, deprived of the divine antidote, follows the law of all compounds left to the course of nature; when the principle of their union is withdrawn, they resolve themselves into the elements of which they are made: "*For* dust thou art, and unto dust thou shalt return<sup>2</sup>."

<sup>1</sup> Gen. iii. 22.

<sup>2</sup> If the history of the fall required collateral testimony, it might be largely found in the inspired writers, who speak always in the same full acceptance of it, as a statement of the literal fact. Job, in defending his righteousness, says, "If I covered my transgressions as Adam, by hiding mine iniquity." (xxxi. 33.) Isaiah says, "The Lord shall comfort Zion. He will comfort all her waste places, and he will make her wilderness like Eden, and her desert like the garden of the Lord." (li. 3.) Ezekiel, so much of whose prophecies is devoted to the restoration of Judah, frequently refers to Paradise. "Thou hast been in Eden, the garden of God." (xxviii. 13.) "All the trees of

There are some peculiarities in the present state of human nature, which strongly refer to

Eden that were in the garden of God envied him." (xxxvi. 9.) "The land that was desolate is become like the garden of Eden." (xxxvi. 35.) Joel, in the well-known and magnificent description of the career of the invading army, strengthens his highest contrast of beauty and desolation by its memory: "The land is as the garden of Eden before them, and behind them as a howling wilderness." (ii. 3).

The tree of life is no less an object of frequent reference. "The fruit of the righteous is a tree of life. When the desire cometh, it is a tree of life." (Prov. xi. &c.) And in the Apocalypse, the greatest of all the prophecies, and which contains the fates of the final ages, it is declared, "To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the tree of life, which is in the midst of the Paradise of God." (Rev. ii. 7.) "In the midst of the street of it, and of either side of the river, was there the tree of life." (xxii. 2.) The general allusions to the history are also of the most decisive order. Our Lord, in renewing the original validity of marriage, says, "Have ye not *read*, that he which made them in the beginning made them male and female; for this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and cleave to his wife, and they twain shall be one flesh." (Matt. xix. 4, 5.) St. Paul repeatedly alludes to the history. "The God of peace shall *bruise Satan* under your feet shortly." Rom. xvi. 20.) "As the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself took part of the same, that through death he might destroy him that hath the power of death, *that is the devil*." (Heb. ii. 14.) "He that committeth sin is of the devil; for the devil sinneth from *the beginning*: the Son of God was manifested for this purpose, that he might destroy the works of the devil." (1 John iii. 8.) "In this the children of God are manifest, and the children of the devil: whosoever doeth not righteousness is not of God." (10): with many others.

the original fall, and which are to be accounted for on no other grounds.

Man is the only animal which obtains a subsistence, often a difficult and scanty one, by the labour of the ground; the only animal to whom toil is *necessary*—a fact altogether the reverse of what might have been expected from his natural superiority over the brute, and from the range open to his intellectual powers.

Woman is the only female which undergoes *severe* pain in parturition—a circumstance contrary to the whole analogy of nature, which reserves pain for accidental injuries or violations of its order.

Woman is the only female subject to the authority of her fellow-creature—a submission which once nearly amounted to slavery, but in which Christianity has extinguished the old inequality, while it has left the dependence.

The connection of clothing with the avoidance of shame, is inexplicable but by the Mosaic history. No nation, however savage, or dwelling in climates whose heat might seem to interdict all clothing, has been found, which does not adopt a certain degree of clothing, and that from an acknowledged sense of shame. This is not to be accounted for on any natural principle.



## CHAPTER X.

### THE FLAME OF THE CHERUBIM.

UNDER the sentence of expulsion, our first parents were now sent into the wilderness. The gentle occupation of their former lives, the dressing and keeping the trees of Paradise, was to be exchanged for the severe labours of the field. The spontaneous luxuriance of the garden was to be followed by the harsh and scanty produce wrung by the sweat of the brow from a soil cursed with sterility. This signal change must have been felt as strong evidence of the Divine displeasure; and yet it may have been but a new form of the Divine mercy. Man had placed himself under circumstances which rendered a continual sense of his crime essential to his restoration. He was sent “to till the ground from which he was taken”—language which seems to imply that the moral of his death was to be impressed on him by the constant occupation of his existence. But labour had also become the safest guardian of his intelligence, his hope, and his virtue.

In all lands where the earth throws out unsolicited abundance, the powers and principles of the human mind either stagnate or take fire ; life fluctuates between gross indulgence and dreary inaction, and man degenerates into the savage.

If it be objected that this evil was to have been equally dreaded in the spontaneous fertility of Paradise, the sufficient answer is ; that the necessity for labour arose from the necessity for discipline, and that necessity from sin.—That, if to a being of unclouded reason and unperverted passions, occupation could be important as the sustenance of virtue ; the activity of the mind might supply occupation, of a much more animating and more exalted order than the labour of the hands ; and that, with God for his visible guide, angels for his companions, and the wonders of the spiritual world throwing their light on the wonders of the material, full and matchless employment lay before the faculties of man.

But he was not left to this gradual lesson. A direct interposition—a visible and perpetual testimony of his early happiness, his fall, and his expulsion ; the fiery pillar, that in after ages was to burn above the march of Israel ; the glory, that was to shine between the cherubim of the Temple, now covered the gate of Paradise ; an unapproachable flame, “ to keep the way to the tree of life.” Yet, fearful as this emblem was, it bore the characteristic of all the Divine interpositions :

under the semblance of terror it was mercy. The seizure of premature immortality by man might obviously have been precluded in various ways. The tree of life might have been withered, as the fig-tree was at the gates of Jerusalem; or the garden might have perished by the natural results of neglect within the generation; or both might have been stricken with the common sterility of the world. But thus man would have lost a memorial, of the highest value to his surviving virtue. In ages of rudeness, with the daily labour for the daily bread forcing all the faculties into the direction of the wants, appeals to the senses must be the chief mode of impressing the heart. If the first man, even in the long lapse of his almost thousand years, with the perpetual anxieties of life, and the growing infirmities of age clouding his perception, was to be supposed incapable of ever forgetting his early happiness and fatal fall; still, to his descendants all must have come with the increasing weakness of tradition. But in front of Paradise flamed the perpetual attestation of his history. With what irresistible impression must he not have told that history, as he pointed to the "eastern gate," which neither the power of man could force, nor even the audacity of man dare to come nigh. How perfectly natural is it to conceive the mingling sorrow and holy hope which might have filled those generations of exile, when on their sabbaths they gathered

round their patriarchal king, and heard his lips, weary with years, yet exulting in the triumph over the grave, speak of that place of glorious beauty which still existed within the impassable barrier before them? What eye of unbelief could resist the testimony of the angry splendour, the sword of fire, that visibly guarded the path to immortality? Or what sullenness of heart could refuse to share in the joy, that their exile was at length to terminate, and that a more than angelic hand was to throw open the gates of a Paradise, to which all before them was but a dream.

It is an additional proof of the purpose of this testimonial, of its continuance, and of the consequent existence of the garden of Eden *after* the fall; that when Cain was sentenced, the immediate act of his Judge was to drive him from the sight of Paradise. He was driven out from "the presence of the Lord," (an expression which can only mean a local glory,) Providence withdrawing the means of grace from those who have abandoned the will. It is equally observable, that the Sethite line continued pure until they successively left that presence; for their departure appears to be distinctly implied in their intercourse with the race of Cain; there being no reason to suppose that the prohibition of approaching Eden laid upon Cain as the first murderer, would be relaxed to the race of infidelity and bloodshed which

followed him. It is clear that it was the Divine purpose to keep the race of Seth separate. It is equally clear, that this separation was long complete; and that its cessation was not the work of violence, but originated on the part of the Sethites. This change involved the abandonment of the "presence of the Lord." But, the visible memorial, the great direct check of evil, being no longer before their eyes, they fell into rapid degeneracy; until the family of Noah alone remained pure, and the world was ripe for ruin.

The jarring conjectures of the most distinguished names of theology on this subject, might supply a new caution against straying beyond the literal sense of Scripture. Lactantius explains the cherubim guard by a constant succession of thunder-storms!—a phenomenon which must have rendered the surrounding country unfit for the habitation of man, driven the descendants of the chosen line to seek some less inclement region, extinguished the worship evidently solemnized within sight of Paradise, and after all been liable to be regarded as scarcely beyond the natural effect of a mountain atmosphere. Nor can we conceive that mere thunder-storms could repel the perpetual efforts of mankind, urged by so intense a motive as the possession of immortality<sup>1</sup>. Tertullian imagines the

<sup>1</sup> Institutiones, l. 2. c. 12.

fire of the cherubim to be simply expressive of climate; and explains it by the ardours of the 'Torrid Zone'. This theory of climate is evidently a favourite one, and probably originated in the Rabbinical fables, which possessed an unaccountable weight in the earlier ages of interpretation. Theodore of Heraclea pronounces the cherubim to be *wild beasts* of some non-descript but peculiarly formidable kind<sup>2</sup>. Grotius, a man of vigorous acquirement, yet adopts the tone which has so unhappily characterized continental interpretation in later times, lowers the miracle to a familiar event, and explains the fiery barrier of Paradise by the blaze of a spring of bitumen. Le Clerc, shrinking from this summary humiliation of a declared work of Divine power, conceives that he restores its dignity by saying, that though the material was bitumen, the blaze was kindled by angels!

More recent authorities are equally fantastic. The Hutchinsonian school imagine the entire statement to mean no more than that the Deity formed a tabernacle with carved figures and a glory at the gate, which being embarked by Noah in the ark, was afterwards carefully deposited in the Jewish Temple! Thus is fabricated the history. The interpretation, equally solid, is, that the Cherubim are the representatives of the Holy

<sup>1</sup> Apolog. c. 47.

<sup>2</sup> Salkeld, of Angels.

Trinity ; and the fiery sword expresses the Atonement<sup>1</sup>. By later opinions, the emblem is still further changed. Instead of being an object of terror, to render the tree of life inaccessible to man, it is represented as meant to “ inspire him with hope ; to state to him that Divine mercy was vouchsafed ; and to constitute an emblem of the Covenant of Grace, in which the Three Persons of the Trinity are engaged<sup>2</sup>. ”

To this strange variety of explanation, there is one answer,—that the entire statement of the history is simply, that angels and a perpetual flame were placed so as to prohibit all entrance into Paradise. And by what inferior means was man to be restrained from forcing his way within its gates once more ? No merely natural obstacle could have accomplished this object. What wall of adamant would not have been worn away by the continued assault of mankind ? What torrent would not have been crossed ? What circumvallation of mountains would not have been climbed ? Pestilence, it is true, might have rendered approach fatal ; but it also might have spread havoc

<sup>1</sup> Parkhurst, Lex. on the word כֶּרֶב. Brown's Antiq. Jews.

<sup>2</sup> Why instruments of palpable terror should have been the only device for administering consolation, if that were the purpose ; or why the *fourfold* faces of the cherubs should be emblematic of the Three Persons of the Godhead ; or why *any visible image* of the Deity, whether angelic or graven, should be allowed, are questions which this theory ought first to answer.

through the surrounding region; and, under all aspects, an effect so common as unhealthiness of soil, would have been a totally inadequate mode of conveying an impression of the direct will and work of Heaven. The theory that the Cherubim were displayed as a source of hope, is altogether unsustained by the text. They are there declared to have been placed “to keep the way to the tree of life,”—a way open only in the period of innocence, and shut as the result of crime. The prohibition was enforced by the acknowledged instruments of human terror,—the sword and the flame.

The German *rationalists* abound in presumptuous interpretation on this subject. Herder, whose folly may be taken as their general representative, pronounces,—that there *probably* was a mountain which shut up the entrance of Paradise: that this mountain was *probably* full of wild beasts; that it was *probably* also the scene of frequent thunder-storms; that it *probably* also exhibited subterranean fires; and that *probably* the original inhabitants of the neighbouring regions moulded and magnified all the phenomena together into angelic monsters<sup>1</sup>. On this system of probabilities, any absurdity that ever entered into the head of man might be probable. Rosenmuller is satisfied that the burning of the Naphtha

<sup>1</sup> Oriental Dialogues.



wells, in Babylonia, is the true solution<sup>1</sup>! He omits to prove that the site of Paradise was in the plain of Babylon. He equally omits to tell us by what well of Naphtha was fed the fiery pillar in the Wilderness, or the blaze that filled the Temple at the dedication. But how much more conformable to the spirit of this great transaction is the literal statement of the historian? Human invention, with all its petty dexterity, can find no substitute for the column of prohibitory splendour, the shekinah, the emblem of the Divine grandeur and terror, flaming, day and night, up to heaven; and perhaps displaying, from the midst of its blaze, the movements and forms assumed by those mighty beings who, in the service of Heaven, unite the rapidity of the whirlwind with the vividness of the flame.

<sup>1</sup> Scholia in Genesin.

## CHAPTER XI.

### THE ELOHIM.

THE use of the plural, אֱלֹהִים, to express the Godhead, deserves to take its place among the Scriptural arguments for a plurality of Persons in the Divine Nature. This plural is used no less than two thousand five hundred times in Scripture ;—and, almost in every example, with reference to Jehovah<sup>1</sup>. The word is used in the singular only about sixty times. Without entering into the prolix dissertations in which philology has indulged on the subject, the question may be summed up in the twofold observation : that the use of the plural for the individual is *not* an idiom of the Hebrew ; and that the strong objections arising from the nature of Judaism to the use of a plural appellative of Deity, could have given way only to the stronger reason, that the plurality of Persons existed.

In the first verse of Genesis, it is declared that

<sup>1</sup> Simon. Lex ; Eickhorn, p. 119.

the Gods (*Elohim*) created heaven and earth, the verb created being singular; and this is the usual construction, the exceptions being comparatively few. In the 26th verse we have the words, "And the Gods (*Elohim*) said, Let *us* make man in our image;" language which naturally implies a plurality, combined in one act. The assertions on the contrary side are---

That the Deity is speaking to the angels.—But this would make *them* the creators, or form the human nature after the angelic; or declare the angelic and the Divine the same: not one of the three suppositions being tenable.

That the historian has adopted the regal style.—But this is not the style of the kings of the Old Testament: and the words are not those of the historian, but expressly of the Deity; they were spoken before kings existed: and no subsequent use of the style can account for the expression, "One of us," in a monarch speaking of himself alone.

But the utter improbability of the gratuitous use of the plural name, under the circumstances of the Jewish dispensation, has never received an answer. The great Jewish doctrine was the *Unity*. The great distinction of the Jewish ritual was the worship of the *One* Godhead. The whole ceremonial law, rigid and minute as it is, was the guardian of this doctrine. The first command, on the entrance of the Israelites into Canaan was, an

unsparing destruction of all things which could betray them into the native polytheism. Yet, in the books which they were to receive as the direct testimony of Heaven, as their guides and consolations, as the substance of their law and the promise of their national welfare, they found the constant use of a word, which, on the common principles of language, expressed a plurality in the Supreme Being. For the use of this word, what was the necessity? Their language was not destitute of other terms to express Deity. They had the name *Jehovah*; or, if this were too sacred for adoption on general occasions, they might have used the singular *Eloah*. But the extreme hazard of justifying the popular tendency to the worship of a plurality of Gods, was to be encountered, and for nothing; and this too in a religion pre-eminently scrupulous, and where all things, even to the fringe of a priest's garment, were regulated by an express ordinance of Heaven!

This objection was so perfectly felt by the Jews, from the period when they began to pervert the literal meaning of Scripture; that the Rabbins<sup>1</sup> in

<sup>1</sup> The perplexity of the Jews of the middle ages is evinced by the invention of the following trivial and presumptuous fable. Rabbi Samuel Bar Nachman said, that Moses, when, in writing the Law, he was come to the place where he was, by Divine dictation, to write, 'Let us make man,' paused, and replied to God, 'Lord of the world, why dost thou afford an occasion for error, with respect to thy most simple Unity?' But the Lord

consequence established it as a rule in their grammars, that in all instances of dominion and honour, the plural may be used for the singular—a rule confessedly naked of all authority.

The intent of the triple name is strongly authenticated by its application to the triple form of the Divine protection, as in Numb. vi. 22. “Jehovah spake to Moses, saying, Speak to Aaron and his sons, saying, Thus ye shall bless the children of Israel, by saying to them, Jehovah *bless* thee and keep thee! Jehovah spread the light of his *presence* on thee, and be *gracious* to thee! Jehovah *manifest his presence* to thee, and grant thee peace. So shall they *put my name upon the children* of Israel, and I will bless them.” This triplicity of office corresponds closely to the Christian benediction of, “The *love* of God, the *grace* of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the *fellowship* of the Holy Spirit<sup>2</sup>.” It is also strongly similar to the baptismal form, the putting the name of Father, Son, and Spirit, upon the Christian. And those words cannot possibly be considered as accidental, or in mere conformity with any acquiescence in national habits, or, in any sense, as the mere phraseology of man: they are the direct language of Deity, delivered by inspir-

replied, ‘Moses, write thou so: and he who desires to err, let him err.’ ” (*Bereshith Rabba.*)

<sup>2</sup> 2 Cor. xii. 14.

ation; and so likely to be adopted in defence of a polytheistic tendency, that they *could not* have been ventured on by any Jewish writer, acting on his own responsibility. What is the natural conclusion, but that the plural is used only because it is *true*; and that it indicates the great doctrine by which, in the more ample revelation of Christianity, we are commanded to worship Father, Son, and Spirit, one God, as the author, mediator, and sanctifier of human salvation <sup>1</sup>?

<sup>1</sup> Adonai (אֲדֹנָי), Sovereign, and Shaddai (שַׁדַּי), all-sufficient, are said, on the high authorities of Drusins, Eickhorn, Gesenius, &c. to be plural. The argument is learnedly and effectively carried into detail in Dr. Smith's "Scripture Testimonies of the Messiah," vol. i. sec. 34.

## CHAPTER XII.

### THE ADAMITE STATE.

THE state of mankind, if Adam had resisted the temptation, can now be only matter of conjecture. Yet it is of importance to show, that on natural principles the Divine benevolence was amply justified in the original condition of human nature; and that the change, which overthrew Adam, was not an expedient forced by any inadequacy in that original condition, nor by any narrowness in the supply of natural enjoyment. The topic was once more perilous than it can be now. There are now no fears of disturbing the old Supralapsarian and Sublapsarian controversies; the most capacious quarrel upon the most intangible subject that ever displayed the animosities of the meek, or the follies of the wise. After spreading over centuries, it is to be presumed that they have fulfilled their work of human bitterness; and, like their predecessors, the mysticisms of Persia and Egypt, have gone down to that grave, from which there is no return.

Of the happiness of the world to come, we are told, that it shall exceed the highest imagination of man. Of the happiness of the original earth, we can have no reason to doubt that it would have equalled the highest imagination of man. If life, defaced as it is, still offers so large a share of manly and moral gratification to all who have sense and virtue enough to seek it where it may be found ; or, if the surface of the globe, torn and stripped as it is by the wild agencies of nature, or sterile by the neglect of man, still exhibits scenes of grandeur and beauty—what an ample provision of delight must have existed in its primal loveliness and luxuriance ? What a still ampler provision must have existed, in the faculties of the human race itself !—Man, as he came from the hand of Deity, spreading life through the earth, in forms of the finest order of beauty, and minds unshaded by disease, decay, or crime. All the humiliating and exhausting labours of existence unknown ; the soil throwing up a perpetual banquet to senses retained in their highest perception ; the dominion of man over nature perpetually advancing ; and, instead of the inevitable repulses that every mind in its turn finds in the infirmities of our frame, and the brevity of our duration ; his natural thirst of knowledge, of all passions the most absorbing, sustained by the strength of an imperishable frame, and the security of an existence inapproachable



by the grave. What limit could be assignable to the successes of the philosopher, following his fine speculations through the infinite material which the world offers, to build up the power and enjoyments of man? What new means of binding the elements in his chain, of giving exuberance to the soil, of multiplying the choicer products of nature, of narrowing the distance between the ends of the earth, of making the sense of sound administer to uses as general, quick, and comprehensive as those of the eye, of possessing in their fulness those deeper treasures of the globe, which we now hazardously and scantily bring up from its gulfs and caverns, of exploring those more solemn and forbidden depths which lie below the earthquake and the ocean, and probably contain countless wonders, of urging a perpetual circulation of wealth, wisdom, law, amity, and religion, through every artery and vein of the great commonwealth, till mankind had but one feeling and one interest, and every nation was made free of the happiness of the world.

Even with all the infirmities of man and earth, what a contrast would be offered to the existing state of both by the simple absence of war? What a harvest of grandeur and loveliness might not be covering the face of the globe at this moment, if the mountains of gold and torrents of blood, flung into the air and buried in the earth by war, had been devoted during the *last four thousand years*

to the embellishment of human life !—What vast cities, filled with every object of curiosity and magnificence, what noble communications, what stately architecture, what majestic monuments to the great leaders and benefactors of nations, what institutions for science, what profusion of the works of genius, what perfection of the picture and the statue, what provinces cultured into gardens, what taming of the asperities and obstacles of nature, what laying low of the mountain, what raising of the valley, what making straight the great general highway of man to the possession of all the good that fills the frame of the world !

## CHAPTER XIII.

### CAIN AND ABEL.

It is natural to suppose that the mind of Eve, when she was about to become a mother, must have strongly reverted to that high declaration by which the offspring of the woman was to “bruise the serpent’s head.” Her very pangs, an evident proof to her that the penalty was real, might have strengthened her reliance on the reality of the promise ; and when she at last held the infant in her arms, it is not less evident, from her use of the Divine name, that she annexed to the birth some feelings above the simple joy of the mother ;—“ I have gotten a man *from the Lord*<sup>1</sup>.” The name, too,

<sup>1</sup> קָנָה a prize, a possession ; קָנָה acquisivit. The nature of Eve’s exclamation has been strongly disputed : and the particle אֵת has been argued to express that Jehovah was its direct object, “ I have gotten a man, the very Jehovah.” It will be admitted that this use of the particle occurs frequently in the first four chapters of Genesis, yet it seems altogether too lofty an assumption to be the natural language of Eve. How could she, in her state of exile, or in any state, deem herself the parent of a being

which she gave the first born is one of triumph. The distinction is observable in the birth of her second son; there was then no triumph. The hopes which, in her ignorance of the nature of infancy, she might have once entertained, had then been chastised by the experience that infancy was weakness; and *weakness* (Abel) was the name. It possibly also was given with some unconscious reference to his early death.

On the arrival of the brothers at manhood, the memorable transaction occurred, which directly shaped the fate of the primitive world, and which has impressed its semblance on every leading portion of the Providential government to this hour.

“And in process of time<sup>1</sup> it came to pass, that Cain brought of the fruit of the ground an offering to the Lord. And Abel, he also brought of the firstlings of his flock, and of the fat thereof. And the Lord had respect to Abel and to his offering, but unto Cain and his offering he had not

already in existence, and that being Deity? Nor is it to be accounted for on the ground of prophecy. Cain was not in any sense the progenitor of the Messiah. The translation equally conformable with the original, and much more natural to the circumstances of Eve, is, “I have gotten *the* man from the Lord.” She knew, that of her the promised conqueror was to be born, and she took it for granted that he was now given.

<sup>1</sup> This has also been translated “at *the* certain time— at the end of days;” as if a fixed period had been already marked for the ceremonial of sacrifice.

respect ; and Cain was very wroth, and his countenance fell<sup>1</sup>."

As the principal object of these pages is to mark the coincidence of the various dispensations ; the subject can now be touched on only so far as to show, that the narrative, taken in its most literal sense, retains its consistency with the ways of Providence among men.

The origin of sacrifice must be looked for in Scripture alone. No human conjecture has ever yet satisfactorily accounted for the first offering of either animals or fruits to an invisible Deity. The shepherd or the husbandman might give a portion of his produce to his friend or master, in hospitality or homage ; but those gifts were to visible beings, and visibly accepted. With an invisible being, the connection between the giver and the receiver is totally intercepted. If the senses are to be the standard, the offering in all instances must seem to be repelled. For, what other conclusion is to be drawn by the senses ? If they are to wait for a visible acceptance by the Deity, the fruits must wither and the fatlings corrupt upon the altar ; there they must wait for ever. It is true, that this impression respects only the early state of worship. When a priesthood was once recognized, there was a visible object ; and offerings for the service of the temple might become an intelli-

<sup>1</sup> Gen. iv. 3.

gible form of gratitude to its invisible Lord. But, in the first instance, sacrifice could have been *rationaly* offered only in obedience to a Divine authority.

The period of the first performance of this essential rite is still unascertained. The prevalent opinion finds it in the text<sup>1</sup>—"And unto Adam and his wife did the Lord God make coats of skins, and he clothed them." It is argued, that as Adam was not likely to have been clothed in the skins of animals which died by the course of nature, and as he had not yet the right to use animals for food, he must have obtained them from those slain *by himself for sacrifice*. But, to this hypothesis there is the one resistless objection, that it is totally unauthorized by the inspired record: there no mention is made of either Adam as a sacrificer, or of sacrifice; God alone is described as in act, and his only act is that of clothing the two criminals. The whole passage is but one of the many, in which a rigid adherence to the text is the way of safety. The literal meaning at once exalts the rite, and illustrates its purposes.

Adam experiences three distinct states. The first, the paradisaic state, innocence "naked and not ashamed," exposed, yet without any humi-

<sup>1</sup> Archbishop Magee hastily says, "This event, which gave birth to the establishment of the rite, seems obviously to determine the *time* of its institution." Vol. ii. 198.---The obviousness is not so clear.

liating sense of exposure. The second, the fallen state, guilt detected ; painfully conscious of personal exposure, and making an imperfect effort to cover itself. The third, the state of promise, guilt forgiven ; man's nakedness effectually clothed by the hand of Deity. "Covering" is the constant scriptural image for shelter from the punishment of sin ; and the three states exactly represent not only the *personal*, but the *moral* condition of the first man.—In paradise he has no protection from the Divine wrath, but he needs none : he is pure.—In his hour of crime, he finds the fatal difference between good and evil, feels that he requires protection from the eye of justice, and makes an ineffectual effort to supply that protection by his own means.—But the expedient which cannot be supplied by man, is finally supplied by the Divine interposition. God clothes him, and his nakedness is the source of anguish and terror no more.

The contrast of the materials of his imperfect and perfect clothing is equally expressive. Adam, in his first consciousness of having provoked the Divine displeasure, covers himself with the frail produce of the ground, the branch and leaf ; but, from the period of forgiveness, he is clothed with the substantial produce of the flock, the skin of the slain animal. It will not be overlooked, how closely this contrast is sustained in the respective sacrifices of Cain and Abel. Cain adopts a self-

suggested atonement, a covering for sin, of the produce of the ground ; Abel a divinely commanded atonement, a covering for sin, of the produce of the flock. The attempt of Cain, like the attempt of Adam, is ineffectual. The adoption of the Divine expedient by Abel is effectual. Cain is punished for his disregard of the sacred lesson. Abel is honoured for its observance : the punishment and the protection equally referring to the emblematic command.

Of the detail thus given, we cannot suppose that any portion was superfluous. The characteristic of the general narrative is the most remarkable brevity ; yet, if circumstances, apparently so trivial, as the clothing of our original parents, are stated : what other reason can be assigned than that they were *not trivial*, that they formed a marked feature of the Divine dispensation, and that they were important to be recorded for the spiritual guidance of man.

The history thenceforth resumes its brevity ; leaving us to make our way by the common knowledge of human motives. Why both Cain and Abel should have offered sacrifice ; when, by the rule which seems to have been universal in the patriarchal line, Adam, as the head of the family, should have been the sole sacrificer ? Why, when the rite had been so lately, and so solemnly taught, they should have formed such widely different conceptions of its nature ? And, why the



different results of their offerings should have kindled a feud, to be extinguished only in homicide? are questions, naturally arising from the narrative, yet which have never been satisfactorily answered.

Perhaps the general principles of our nature may lead us to the elucidation. The right of eldership, and the purposes of sacrifice, both closely connected with the chief of all topics, the promise of the great Restorer; must naturally have occupied a large share of human consideration in the first ages. We know that those ages bore no resemblance to the barbarism that followed the deluge. Adam was in neither the state of the savage, feeding on acorns; nor of the hunter, wild, and living on the flesh of animals. He had begun his sojourn in the wilderness, in the third state, the agricultural. perhaps the happiest of all. Civilization was already beyond its infancy. One of the first works even of Cain. and of Cain in his banishment, was the foundation of a city. Thus, high topics were not beyond the capacity of the human mind. Yet as, in all the light of civilization and Scripture, we have contemptuous denials of the truth; the same obstinacy may have been displayed in the tents of Adam. Cain must have been proud and presumptuous, long before his temperament could have been inflamed to murder. An arrogant heart would have furnished him with strong prejudices against the rite, which by ap-

pointing animal sacrifice, as the instrument of immediate propitiation, and the emblem of the still greater blessing to come, might seem to raise the shepherd above the tiller of the soil. The arguments which have been so often urged against the atonement in after times, are too congenial to a presumptuous spirit, to have escaped the willing sceptic in any age of the world,—the deficiency of all natural connexion between the acquittal of guilt, and the sufferings of a creature incapable of crime ;—the contrast between the purification of the heart, and the shedding of blood ;—or, if sacrifice must be offered to a beneficent Deity, the inferior suitableness of flesh and blood to the produce of the ground, the rich, useful, and innocent work of his own rain and sunshine, involving neither pollution nor pain.

To those objections no reply could be made, then or now, but, that such was the *command*. The offering of animal sacrifice is evidently not the result of any natural process of the mind. And, if a further revelation had not discovered its object to man, the connexion of this apparent waste of unresisting life with the acquittal of crime must have remained among the most inscrutable mysteries of religion. But the true bearing of the argument is,—that a rite directly repulsive, costly, and painful ; which yet was practised from the beginning by all nations ; and most habitually and solemnly by the nation chosen to preserve the

true idea of the Divine being ; and most scrupulously by the wisest, most virtuous, and most divinely favoured, of that nation ; must have had its origin in some source above human invention.

That it so had its origin, and that the purpose of the whole rite was a reference to the future bloodshedding of the Redeemer, is, also, not merely consistent with the general narrative ; but is the *only conception* on which the repulse of Cain's offering can be made intelligible. It is clear, that the offering of fruits and flowers gives the mind no representation whatever of human death ; while the slaying of one of the inferior animals gives every feature of the physical suffering. Thus Cain's offering must have been utterly valueless, as an emblem of the great propitiation ; and thus failing in the only object for which sacrifice was divinely appointed, it justly underwent a total rejection<sup>1</sup>.

<sup>1</sup> The objections of late theories to the Divine origin of sacrifice may be briefly answered. It has been said that if sacrifice were of Divine origin, Moses *ought* to have distinctly stated it, as he has stated the sacrificial institution in his law : or that if God had commanded it, there is no reason why it should not have been placed in the Decalogue. To this the obvious answer is : That we have no right to prescribe what Moses *ought* to have done ; that its Divine origin is marked by the "clothing with skins" as contrasted with clothing with the produce of the ground ; which though not a *sacrifice* offered by either the Deity or by man, was an emblem ; and as such, coming from God, and connected with the prophetic sentence just given, is a decla-

But the disgrace of Cain's altar, irritating, as it must have been, to his presumption, was con-

ration of the value of sacrifice sufficiently intelligible to us, and therefore, we have no reason to doubt, sufficiently intelligible to Adam. As to the omission of the detail of the first sacrifice; the remark has been frequently and justly made, that the historian omits other evidently important circumstances, the prophecy of Enoch, &c. in the rapidity of the narrative, and that he limited himself to matters of strict necessity.

Why the sabbath was one of the commands of the Decalogue, while sacrifice was not: is accounted for by the evident intention of the Divine Being that the observance of a sabbath should be *perpetual*, which was not the case with sacrifice. The Decalogue was the publication of the Principles of Divine Law.

It has been said that the prevalence of sacrifice in the ancient world is naturally to be traced to the sacrifice offered by Noah after the deluge. But where did Noah find the authority for that sacrifice, if not in the practice of his fathers? Or, where did he find his distinction of clean and unclean animals? a distinction existing before the flood, (as in the instance of entering the Ark,) and a distinction which, with Moses, expressly referred to sacrifice. It is alleged that the sacrifice of Noah was eucharistical. But, where is the proof that any eucharistical sacrifice existed before the law? Noah's sacrifice was one of blood, to a great extent: "he took of every clean beast and clean fowl" for a burnt-offering, of *all* the living creatures capable of sacrifice, for himself and for the earth; and the result of its acceptance with God, was the relief of the *earth* from the *curse*, and a promise that it should not return. "God smelled a sweet savour, and he said, I will not again curse the ground any more." Are not all those, signs of the sacrifice for sin? The sacrifice was accepted, and the punishment of the sin of earth remitted.

It has been said, that St. Paul's declaration, "By faith Abel

nected with a result still more startling to his pride. The question of sacrifice comprehended

offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain, by which he obtained witness that he was righteous; God testifying of his gifts," means little more than that he, being a more virtuous man than Cain, offered a more pleasing sacrifice. But what does the historian say more of the virtue of Abel than of Cain *before* the sacrifice? And how can we conceive Cain to have been disqualified previously; when we find the Divine Being urging him even after his failure, to offer sacrifice, and for the actual purpose of reinstating himself. Or is not Abel's faith declared to be directly connected with the sacrifice? "By faith Abel offered a more excellent sacrifice." This faith too must have been the result of a command or promise of Deity. "For faith (Rom. x. 11.) cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God." The faith of all the patriarchs was reliance on a promise or obedience to a command. Or, in the estimate of St. Paul, or of any Christian, what could faith in sacrifice have meant, but a looking forward to the Messiah!

The grammatical, or verbal, controversy turns chiefly on two words מנחה and *πρωτό*. "The Lord had respect unto Abel and his *Mincha*." It is contended from this that the offering was the same *mincha*, as under *the law*, "where it meant in general an offering of flour." This however is fully repelled, by the observations, that the chief and original meaning of *mincha* was an *offering of any kind*; (Parkhurst. Le Clerc on Levit. ii. 1. &c.) even in the sense of a present to a superior or prince. (1 Kings x. 25; 2 Chr. ix. 24; 2 Kings viii. 8. 9.) That it sometimes means gifts brought by strangers to the temple, and that its peculiar distinction was an oblation, whether of an animal or the produce of the ground, *consumed at the altar*. The three sacrificial terms, *Corban*, *Mincha*, and *Zebach*, severally meaning: *Corban*, whatever was brought to God before the altar, whether dismissed, dedicated, or sacrificed; *Mincha*,

the whole principle of the patriarchal religion. Nothing was more natural than that any contempt

whatever was *consumed* at the altar, whether animate or inanimate; and *Zebach*, the oblation of an animal slain in sacrifice. (Kennicott, *Two Diss. Magee*, vol. ii.) Besides, *Mincha* does directly express an animal sacrifice in 1 Sam. ii. 17. and Mal. i. 13.

The *πλεον*, applied to Abel's sacrifice, has been said to imply, that the cause of its being accepted was the abundance of his offering, or perhaps the addition of the fruits of the ground to the firstlings of his flock. This stands wholly on the supposition that *πλεον* necessarily refers to *number*. But the supposition is contradicted by its use, as denoting *superior excellence*. "Is not the soul more (*πλεον*) than meat?" (Matt. vi. 25.) "Behold, a greater (*πλεον*) than Jonas is here!" (Ibid. xii. 41.) Schleusner gives its true meaning in the text, "a *fuller* sacrifice," one more possessing the value and nature of the acceptable offering. It is further to be observed that, if we take the *mincha* in the restricted meaning which it afterwards assumed in the law, Cain, who offered his *mincha*, must have offered "fine flour with oil poured upon it, and *frankincense* placed thereon;" the latter, at least, a product not likely to have enriched the soil of thorns and thistles; even if the olive should have ripened in that sterile world.

The true distinction of the offerings of Cain and Abel, is to be found in the original purpose of sacrifice. *Loss of life* was essential to the representation of the great final blood-shedding on the cross. The acceptance of fruits, &c. under the Jewish economy, was eucharistical, and for minor purposes.

Archbishop Magee falls into the error of conceiving, that "the blood which speaketh better things than the blood of Abel," refers to the blood of the lamb on Abel's altar. This the whole context forbids. The true allusion is, to the superiority of the blood which *pardons*, to the blood which *accuses*—the blood

of the original rite should have excited anxiety in whatever population existed on the earth ; and no more obvious way of deciding the subject could have been adopted, than that of appealing to the Author of the command, by a double sacrifice. The result was undeniable : Cain, by some distinct mark of the Divine displeasure, was rejected<sup>1</sup>. But this rejection drew with it consequences which must have been felt painfully by any mind, and might have turned an arrogant and self-willed spirit into fury. The primitive sacrificer was the head of the family<sup>2</sup> ; custom

of the Messiah, to that blood which cried out of the ground against Cain. Between the blood of Abel's altar and of the Cross, there could be no difference in effect, the one being only the emblem of the other - the object of both the same.

<sup>1</sup> We have an instance of this appeal to a Divine solution, in the Apostolic choice of a successor to Judas. We have a still closer similitude, in the contending claims of Elijah and the priests of Baal ; a *sacrificial* instance. The only point of distinction between the cases of Abel and Elijah being that, in the latter, the true Deity was to be discovered by the sacrifice ; in the former, the true sacrifice was to be discovered by the Deity. In both, the appeal was made by sacrifice, and to Heaven.

Theodotion translates the acceptance by *επεμψιστερ*. Fire from heaven was the usual sign under the law, Lev. ix. ; Judg. vi. ; Kings xviii., &c. See also Heidegger.

<sup>2</sup> "From Adam's example was probably derived the primitive custom, that the *head of the family was also its priest* : as in the cases of Noah, Gen. viii. 20 ; Job i. 5 ; Abraham, Gen. xii. 8 ; xv. 9, 10, &c. ; Melchizedec, Gen. xiv. 18 ; Isaac, Gen. xxvi. 25 ; Jacob, Gen. xxxi. 54."—*Hale's Chronol.* v. 2. 28.

which seems to have been universal in the patriarchal line, and to have continued to the appointment of the especial priesthood of the Jews. It is perfectly natural to conceive that disqualification, in an office so high as the chief depositary and instrument of the national religion, should operate strongly against all other claims to superiority. And it is plain, that it did so operate, in the rejection of Cain from the headship of the family.

“ And the Lord said to Cain, ‘Why art thou wroth? and why is thy countenance fallen? If thou doest well, shalt thou not be accepted? and if thou doest not well, a sin-offering lieth at the door.’” This is the *New Covenant* with mankind, as applied to Cain. The original Covenant would have said to him, as it had said to Adam, “ If thou doest well, shalt thou not be accepted? but if thou doest not well, *thou shalt die.*” The New Covenant, on the contrary, offers reconciliation, and offers it *by sacrifice*. The passage is evidently a remonstrance of the Deity; but one of those remonstrances by which he gives the sinner an opportunity of retracing his steps: a proceeding of Providence similar to those which subsequently warned the world of the coming of the flood; the Ninevites, and the kingdoms of Israel and Judah, before the captivities, &c. The remonstrance is in the language of friend with friend. For, it is to be observed, that the offence of Cain had yet



scarcely gone beyond a rash dependence on his own opinion ; he had not disowned God, nor even refused to honour him by the rite of sacrifice : his error was the every-day one of thinking himself wiser than revelation, and modifying Divine things by human prejudices. The obvious paraphrase of the passage is, “ Why art thou angry and discontented ? what conditions can be more favourable than those given to man ? If he does righteously, he is, of course, free from Divine punishment ; and if he sins, pardon is within his reach, on the easy terms of offering an animal sacrifice.” This doctrine *we know* to be the truth, and to be the actual spirit of that covenant of promise, which was given to Adam as a protection from the final punishment of his first sin ; and on which the whole future system of the Divine pardon was constructed. After this statement of the principle, follows the reference to the peculiar case of Cain. The only direct offence of which we know any thing in his instance, was his offering an unsuitable sacrifice ; and the only causes of his discontent were, the disgrace of its open rejection, and its evidence that the younger brother was preferred as the sacrificer ; an evidence which endangered the right of the elder to the headship of the line. To this latter source of discontent the Deity applies in the words : “ And unto thee shall his

desire be, and thou shalt rule over him." In effect, it is declared, that animal sacrifice would not only ensure the general pardon of his sin ; but, that compliance with the rite would secure his eldership ; that his brother, whom the accepted sacrifice had placed in a higher condition for the time, should again become his subordinate, and his right of superiority be once more acknowledged.—“ Unto thee shall his desire be ; and thou shalt rule over him :” a declaration wholly unnecessary, unless the natural subordination of the younger branches of the patriarchal family to its heir,—a subordination divesting those branches of the paternity of Christ—had been already disturbed.

The declaration seems to have been made while Cain was in his first wrath at the repulse of his offering ; probably while he yet stood beside the dishonoured altar, and under the eyes of his parents and their offspring<sup>1</sup>. But the opening for return was disregarded ; a darker way was more congenial to the mind of the first sceptic. We are told (in apparent contrast to the publicity of the rebuke,) that he afterwards talked with his brother (evidently alone,) in the field ; and there

<sup>1</sup> It is not improbable that, before this period at least, daughters were born to our first parents. Cain builds a city in the early part of his exile ; which naturally implies some degree of population.

adopted the most direct of all means to extinguish rivalry: "Cain rose up against Abel, and slew him<sup>1</sup>."

The conception, that the loss of the eldership was the chief source of Cain's discontent, and the chief stimulant to his final crime, is further confirmed by the nature of his punishment. The act which, in the shortsightedness of cruelty and rage, was to make him secure of possession, instantly puts it beyond all hope. The murder had been secret; he had probably buried the body; he is questioned by the Deity—"Where is Abel, thy brother?" He answers by an insolent equivocation, if not a sneer at the sentence which had placed his brother above him:—"Am I my brother's keeper?" His sentence is, in every sense, *judicial*: in all points, it marks the nature of his crime; the tillage, in the superiority of whose produce he confided, is to be at an end, the earth is cursed *to him*; the inheritance and superiority over the race of Adam, for which he committed murder, is to be so totally alienated, that he is never to be master of any authority over man

<sup>1</sup> Kennicott says,—“The transgression of Cain is recorded, among other reasons, to account for the transfer of the seniority, or right of primogeniture; and so the parentage of the Messiah, from Cain's into Seth's younger line: which was absolutely necessary to be known in the history of our Lord's genealogy.”—*Diss.* II.

or earth ; his foot is never to have even a resting-place ; and his whole life is to be a flight from the face of human being.

Cain's retort to his sentence has been interpreted sometimes as scorn, sometimes as deprecation ; but, from a murderer unrepentant, and writhing under a consciousness of irretrievable ruin, it sounds much more the language of furious despair. Like many a daring criminal since, he finds a fierce vigour even in the depth of his infliction. He tauntingly pronounces that the severity of the punishment must defeat itself :—" My punishment is greater than I can bear<sup>1</sup>." He recapitulates, with a feeling not singular in the undone, the keener stings of his sentence, his expulsion from the land where the Divine glory still shone at the gate of Paradise :—" From thy face I shall be hid ;" and his perpetual toil and exile :—" I shall be a fugitive and vagabond

<sup>1</sup> This has been translated, " My iniquity is greater than can be forgiven ;" on the authority of the Septuagint, the Vulgate, the Syriac, and Arabic. But this meaning is difficult to reconcile with the context. The reckless spirit of Cain would *naturally* defy an inevitable punishment. Æschylus may have found the model of his Prometheus in this sullen scorn of a suffering which no deprecation could have the power to avert. The passage has been also tried with an interrogatory :—" Is my iniquity too great to be forgiven ?" But this contrition is inconsistent alike with the character of the criminal and the *execution* of his sentence.

upon the earth ;” closing with the bitter self-congratulation, that a punishment of this order must speedily have an end ; that a life, thus exposed by Heaven, must fall an easy prey to the hostility of man :—“ Every one that findeth me will slay me.” But the answer to this defiance gives him only another proof that the Divine judgment is not to be baffled. He is told that there is no hope for him in the violence of mankind ; that a sign shall be put upon him, to reserve the criminal for the full completion of his sentence ; and that sevenfold vengeance shall be proclaimed against his slayer. His banishment follows, without delay :—“ And Cain went out from the presence of the Lord.”

The sentence of Cain stands alone in the history of judgment ; but some, at least, of its objects may be discoverable. His natural punishment would have been, to have perished on the spot, by that law of retaliation which is imprinted in the heart of man—the wild justice of nature. But larger objects might have been lost by this summary extinction. In a young world, rising at once into numbers and violence, few warnings against bloodshed could be more powerful, than the sight of the eldest born of mankind, the head of the hallowed line, and chieftain of all the dwellers of the earth, flung into utter ruin, amerced of his rank, possessions, and country, and driven, like a wild beast, from the haunts of

man. Even that bitter aggravation of his exile, his perpetual flight, might have aided the purpose, by spreading the warning. . That the nature of his crime must have been made known to those “ sons and daughters” which were born to Adam, and to those descendants of Cain which fixed themselves in the land of “ exile,” is evident from the declaration, that the “ sign” should preserve him from being slain ; a declaration implying that the story, the penalty, and the sign, were to be alike matters of common knowledge. Accordingly, we find Cain, his guilt, and his sign, alluded to in the *seventh* generation, perhaps a thousand years after, and in words which seem even to express that he was then alive<sup>1</sup>.

Yet, the Divine wisdom is not limited to a single purpose. To people the earth, and to preserve the sacred race of the Sethites from pollution, were equally objects of the Deity.

In all periods of mankind the planting of remote lands has been a reluctant effort. The division of the earth after the Deluge was effected only by a Divine command, seconded by an indignant miracle. In Greece, the great settler of the north and west, the colony was, in almost all instances, the product of civil convulsion ; the victorious party cut away a portion of the State,

<sup>1</sup> “ If Cain *shall* be avenged sevenfold, truly Lamech seventy and seven fold.”

and cast it forth to strike root in the wilderness. In later Europe it has been the product of disastrous war, or religious persecution. The change has always been explosive. Man clings to home; and if he is to be projected beyond seas and mountains into untried lands, it must be by some of those shocks and throes which put society in peril. If he take shelter in the swamp and the forest, it must be from a contrast of their quiet with the tumult that he has left behind. Our day forms the single exception. The gentler shape which this great operation is now assuming, and which more resembles the silent diffusion of light and heat through the atmosphere than the tempests of the past, forms one of the most grateful and singular characteristics of the time.

Cain colonized in the first land to which he was driven, and there built a city. Of him nothing more is told. But as we *know* that, for the sake of punishment, his life was put beyond the reach of chance, we may justly conceive that it was not shortened by nature. He had one son, Enos: he might, like Adam, have had many whose names have not been recorded. If he built a city, which became a place of permanent dwelling for Enos and his descendants, we can have no reason to doubt, that in his wanderings he might have made many of those little beginnings of settlement which were in the power of a

fugitive. That he continued to wander, we know, from the express sentence, that he should be a "fugitive and vagabond upon the earth." The most natural form, even the most natural aggravation of his punishment, would be, that of continually making those efforts either to find rest, or stubbornly to defeat the Divine sentence; and of being continually driven from each spot, at the moment when he had made it the settlement of himself and his children. We can scarcely conceive a life of keener suffering than this constant struggle against an inevitable sentence; this continually reviving hope of ease broken up by continual disappointment; this feeling that he had perpetually to begin life anew, to be driven from every connection of kindred as soon as it was formed, roaming, like the dæmon of after times, through the desert, seeking rest and finding none; and thus, divorced from human nature, to wander on from age to age through the solitudes of the globe. Yet those small settlements, planted at wide distances from each other, unchecked by mutual hostilities, and with full room to spread, might be among the most direct and powerful means of peopling the world.

But if it be objected that the peopling of the great wilderness would thus have been left to a race marked by Divine alienation: the answer is, that the peopling of the finest portions of the



earth, in after times, was given to men and nations notoriously corrupt and alien. What was the origin of the great Asiatic kingdoms? Robbery. Who were the chief transmitters of manners and civilization to Greece? Egyptian and Canaanite idolators. Who were the planters of the southern shores of the Mediterranean, and the great leaders in all that influence which commercial wealth and enterprise exerted upon the early European and Asiatic world?—Tyrian and Sidonian idolators? Or, what nation was it that least extended its power, its influence, or its blood, and never intentionally sent out a colony? The only nation which possessed religious knowledge. Thus unsearchable are the ways of Providence.

Still, we are not entitled to decide that among the myriads settled by Cain and his sons in the deserts of the globe; all were equally sharers in the irreligion or the passions of their ancestor. Men will be judged according to their opportunities. The Spirit of God strove with men before the Deluge, as he strives still. And, as no Christian can believe that the millions of the heathen world who never heard of Christianity, will be judged for their ignorance of its doctrines; so we cannot doubt, that in the Cainite generations multitudes were to be found sharing the mercy of that impartial Providence, which, if it give the Christian a higher promise, with a higher responsibility, yet looks with a paternal eye upon all.

The nature of the sign of Cain has exercised the usual quantity of disquisition. By some it is even conceived to be a miracle wrought in his presence to cheer him with a pledge of safety! But no consolation could have been intended for the murderer. Length of life too was his terror<sup>1</sup>. By others, it has been supposed a "horror of countenance," to make mankind shun him, or even make all assault fatal. But if those conceptions were true, the penalty would have been unnecessary. The more natural meaning is, that Cain bore some marks on his person, or his visage, sufficient to make him known as the man whose death was to be visited with the severest vengeance. "The Lord set a mark upon Cain, lest any, *finding him*, should kill him." If found, then, he must, like other men, be exposed to the violence of fierce times, and the chances of a man roaming through the world. The text implies, that he might, under those circumstances, have been as easily slain as any other man; and it is to prevent his being an object of violence that the penalty is denounced. The sign might have been, as in later times, a brand of the name or crime upon his forehead. Providence wastes no miracle. The safeguard of his unhappy exist-

<sup>1</sup> Bishop Conybeare says, "Probably it was such as answered the purpose of punishment." The Septuagint translates it, "God set a sign to Cain;" which Bishop Wilson conceives to mean, a miracle wrought to *satisfy* him of his security.

ence lay in the Divine command ; and any mark which was sufficient to identify him, was sufficient for all the purposes. Yet, in the ante-diluvian age, all is typical ; and a deep *prophetic* meaning may have been couched in the mark of Cain.

## CHAPTER XIV.

### THE LONGEVITY OF THE PATRIARCHS.

THE length of ante-diluvian life is one of the most distinct statements of Scripture. It is further substantiated by the evident importance of its purposes at the time, by its consistency with the circumstances of the history, and by a most powerful, though hitherto unnoticed, prophetic coincidence with the leading eras of the Jewish Dispensation. It has been resisted, but on the feeblest of all grounds, that it is no more the course of nature. But, on this point, it should be observed, that the duration of human life seems to be altogether unconnected with any *law* of nature. The physiologist has hitherto discovered nothing in the human frame, which should make a life of threescore and ten years more *natural* than a life of as many hundreds. He finds *no preparation* for determinate decay. Looking at the frame of man in health, nothing but the common knowledge, that all must die, could lead him to pro-

nounce that the configuration before him was not immortal.

He would, of course, feel that the delicacy and complexity of the mere mechanical structure singularly exposed it to accident; and he might well be astonished that the innumerable nerves and veins, the organs fine as a hair, and microscopic muscles, which act in some of the most constant functions of the frame, the exquisite fibres which suspend the lenses of the eye, or carry vibration through the chambers of the ear, should act, for fifty or a hundred years together, with the most unwearied and unerring precision. But he would remark, that this extraordinary machine possessed a quality, denied to all the works of human invention—the power of self-repair, a constant renewal of every distinct portion, substantially changing the whole material every few years, yet retaining its form and its uses totally unchanged. He would remark another provision still more remote, if possible, from the work of human ingenuity—a provision against contingency, a prospective resource against the fracture or the wound, which might never occur; a store which, if not required, remained in the frame, neither wasted nor superfluous. And in all those, which yet are the most common phenomena of the system, he would see the pledges of an existence, once actually prepared for unlimited duration.

Unquestionably, there must be some physical cause for the rapid decay of life in our world ; for the Deity executes his established will by established means. But the cause utterly evades human knowledge. No principle in nature has hitherto been ascertained, by which the heart, that beats four thousand times an hour, for seventy or a hundred years, may not vibrate, impel, and pour, at the same marvellous rate, for a thousand. The probable source of our ignorance is, that the superiority of the machine transcends all calculation ; that we have no data in the works of human skill for an approximation to the causes of decay in the works of Deity.

If we are thus utterly unable to assign the principle of decay, who shall be entitled to assert the impossibility of an existence of ten times our duration ? Nothing, in the researches of modern science, can authorize us to say, that some impalpable fibre added, or withdrawn ; the infusion of some drop too subtle for human perception ; might not make the entire difference between the age of Methuselah and threescore and ten ; between the noble longevity that, transferred to a later time, might have stretched from the Norman conquest to this hour, and the confused and feeble fragment of existence that belongs to ourselves ; between the knowledge that might have thus embraced the whole various and stirring drama of European history, and the narrow experience

that sees but the shifting of a scene ; between the magnificent power of vision that commands the birth and progress of polity, human and Divine, for a thousand years, and the eye involved in the vapours of its brief and giddy day, perplexed with knowledge which a few years more will scorn as ignorance, and passionate for objects which will be pronounced absurdities, or evils, before it is cold in the grave.

To the Christian, the fact that this statement, or any other, is found in Scripture, is perfect proof. Having originally satisfied his understanding, on manly and sincere inquiry, that Christianity is true ; and taking, as the same inquiry will fully authorize him to take, the great maxim, that “ all Scripture is by inspiration of God,” in the most complete and literal sense of the words ; his mind is at ease for ever. Yet he is not the more forbidden to examine the testimony of nature. He is even so far from being bound down to mental slavery of any kind, that he is actually the only man who is justified in his research into nature : for who but the believer in a Deity can rationally inquire into the *laws* of his works ? What security can the infidel philosopher have, that the confusion which he attempts to investigate, will ever conduct him to order ? that if darkness and chance were the beginning, they may not be the end of all things ? that every step may not be only into more incomprehensible obscu-

rity? In fact, every attempt at inquiry is a practical denial of his principles; for every attempt must be made in the involuntary conviction, that there exists a great ruling Power, whose ultimate ways are light and wisdom.

The *possible* longevity of the patriarchs thus cannot be denied; but its probability may be strongly argued from the advantage, perhaps the necessity, of possessing such depositaries as the patriarchs, for the transmission of the worship, arts, and natural knowledge, of the first ages. We have no evidence that writing was known before the Deluge. It might have been among those gifts of Heaven reserved for the use of the more active, diversified, and intellectual period, which was to open on the renewed world. But, without this incomparable art, there seems to be no expedient for preserving tradition but extreme length of life. To this purpose, as has been frequently observed, the ante-diluvian duration would be strikingly adequate. The lives of two patriarchs would reach nearly from the creation to the Deluge. And as each was the contemporary of five or six generations, (with the exception of Enoch), the testimony would be delivered to his sons and his sons' sons, with the united authority of the priest, the chieftain, and the ancestor.

The general circumstances which *transpire* in the narrative, are also strikingly consistent with this degree of longevity—the threat, for instance,



of destroying all life at the end of a hundred and twenty years ; which, perhaps, would but lightly affect the modern race of man, would be one of the most formidable inflictions to a race, to whom it implied the cutting off nearly nine-tenths of the common duration of existence—the time of their children's birth bears nearly the modern proportion to maturity—the decreasing rates of life after the Deluge, from the 600 years of Shem to the 239 of Peleg, and the 175 of Abraham, are suitable to the idea of great previous longevity ; the decrease itself being satisfactorily accounted for by the cessation of its use, from the improved opportunities of record, the extended establishment of worship, the more various and intelligent intercourses of man ; and probably, most of all, from the evident intention of Providence at once to make the pressure of population less hazardous, and to produce a larger harvest of human existence ; two objects, so apparently opposed, that their successful combination may be looked upon as among the most remarkable effects of providential wisdom.

## CHAPTER XV.

### THE SEPTUAGINT.

THE periods of the patriarchal generations have been hitherto overlooked by the commentators. But it will be found, that they constitute a series of *predictions* of an entirely new order; a great chronological prophecy, of the most accurate, graphic, and consecutive kind.

Among the minor advantages of this view, is the elucidation of that singularly controverted and important question, the comparative validity of the Septuagint and Hebrew computations. On the revival of literature, and the renewed attention of Europe to the Scriptures, unlimited reliance was placed on the Hebrew text; and its dates especially were adopted as incontestible. Subsequent inquiry, however, showed that those dates inadequately corresponded with the order of events; and a sufficient cause for the corruption was at length discovered in the tampering of the Jewish doctors with the original.—(Hales's Chron. vol. i.)

According to the Hebrew copies, the years from

the Creation to the Deluge are 1656 ; according to the Septuagint they are 2262. This extraordinary difference is thus accounted for. The Cabalists, whose fantastic theory turns chiefly on the use and position of letters, calculated the duration of the world at 6000 years, (with a seventh Chiliad for the Sabbath,) from finding the letter Aleph (which stands for 1000) six times in the first verse of Genesis. They further assumed that the Messiah was to come in the middle of the last thousand. In the declining days of Judaism those absurdities usurped the place of knowledge, and it became a national argument, peculiarly *after* the death of our Lord, that he had come earlier than the true Messiah *could have come*. The Eastern Jews, by cutting off 600 years from the antediluvian period, threw back his birth into the fifth Chiliad ; the Western Jews pushed the expedient still further, and by cutting off 540 more, threw it into the fourth ; the former dating the Creation B. C. 4220, the latter B. C. 3760. And this rude and palpable artifice was a sufficient subterfuge for the wilful prejudices of a people distracted by national ruin, “scattered and peeled,” without leisure to think or learn, and, in the general bereaving of all things else, clinging with a bitter and desperate fidelity to their patrimonial errors.

But in earlier times no difference had existed between the Hebrew and the Septuagint. If there ever was a human work which from the circum-

stances of its production and use might be deemed authentic in the highest degree, it was that celebrated translation. It was made at the formal request of the powerful and allied sovereign of Egypt, and made from a copy officially sent by the High Priest, and committed to the ablest translators who were to be found in the Jewish people<sup>1</sup>. Its appearance was received with national joy ; it was the chief form in which the Scriptures were offered to the Gentile world ; it rapidly superseded the Hebrew in all the foreign synagogues ; it became the chief authority in Judea itself, when, by the vicissitudes of time, the original language ceased to be spoken ; it was quoted by our Lord, and is constantly referred to by the early Fathers. No shade was ever cast upon its authority, until the Jewish doctors found themselves beaten down by the prophecies of the Messiah. The text of the Septuagint was beyond their reach ; but their guilty dexterity was exerted to degrade its authenticity. They first made it a national abhorrence, by binding on every man of their people an interdict against its perusal, and instituting a solemn fast on the 8th day of the month Tebeth, to curse the memory of its having been written ! But the Septuagint was in the hands of the world, and could be affected only by a rival version. The

<sup>1</sup> Bp. Walton's Prol. c. 9, &c. Voss. de 70 Interp. Other statements have been given ; but there can be no doubt of the early celebrity and universal acceptance, of the Septuagint.

measure was actively adopted : no less than three versions, for the purpose of degrading its general character, were successively made.

The first was by Aquila (about A. D. 128.). Aquila was fit for fraud. He had been first a Pagan priest, then a nominal Christian, then a Jew. Thus heathen, convert, and apostate, he is openly charged by Epiphanius with having constructed his version with the direct intent of "invalidating the testimonies concerning Christ." The Jews are alike openly charged by Justin Martyr<sup>1</sup> with altering, and even expunging those prophecies from the copies of the Septuagint in their synagogues. But, for the purpose of excluding the ancient version altogether, another, more nearly resembling its gravity and idiom, was made (about A. D. 185) by Symmachus, whom Jerome calls "a Jew and a *blasphemer*." A third was made by Theodotion,, whose translation of the Book of Daniel is now used by the Christian Church, that book having been lost in the Septuagint<sup>2</sup>. But the Hebrew copies being almost totally in their power, at a time when the language had long ceased to be spoken, and the nation and its literature were equally lost to the observation of mankind, that shorter computation of the lives

<sup>1</sup> Dialogues with Trypho.

<sup>2</sup> Some fragments of it were discovered about A. D. 1772.—*Le Long. B. S.*

of the ante-diluvians was inserted, which to the Jews was thenceforth to form a satisfactory argument against the mission of our Lord.

The first instances of this corruption began as early as A. D. 128, for it was sanctioned by the Seder Olam Rabba, the Jewish system of chronology written by Rabbi Jose, under the auspices of the celebrated Rabbi Akiba. Yet it made little progress, for Eusebius (who died A. D. 340) "found in the Hebrew copies which he consulted, different accounts of the times, some following the longer, others the shorter computation." Their contrivance for moulding the age of the world, was by taking a century from some of the generations, and adding it to the residue of the lives; thus diminishing the length of the series, while they preserved the individual longevity. An additional evidence of the corruption is to be found in their management of the later lives. If the hundred years had been abstracted from the generations of Jared, Methuselah, and Lamech, their deaths must have been placed *after* the Deluge—Jared 66 years, Methuselah 200, and Lamech 95. They therefore left those generations as they were. It subsequently became habitual to make alterations in the genealogies, according to the convenience of the moment. The Samaritan Pentateuch has changed the years of the generations several times since the days of Origen (A. D. 230.)

The weight of authority now lies on the side of the Septuagint, or computation which gives the longer periods, (generally about a hundred years additional,) to the generations of the patriarchs, as the *true* transcript of the Hebrew original. Still, as in all matters which rest upon authority, the opposite side finds champions; and the only hope of a final decision must rest in the discovery of some authentic evidence that the one corresponds with Scripture, while the other fails in the correspondence. If the following view of the patriarchal generations be established, this most important question in chronology is decided, and the Septuagint computation is the true one.

## CHAPTER XVI.

### THE ANTE-DILUVIAN PATRIARCHS.

It will be shown that a direct connection, an exact and unbroken parallelism, is maintained between the patriarchal periods from Seth to Abraham, and the periods of the Jewish and Christian history ;—that not merely the periods retain an exact coincidence, but that even the *names* of the patriarchs are descriptive of the *characters* of the corresponding periods in the Jewish annals ;—and, in fact, that the whole of the ante-diluvian and post-diluvian record, down to the calling of Abraham, is not merely a history, in the proper sense of the word, but also an actual series of prophecy.

By taking the Deluge and the fall of Jerusalem (A. D. 70) as corresponding points in the patriarchal and Jewish dispensations, (a correspondence to which the mind is naturally led alike by the circumstances, and by the allusions in the Evangelists), and tracing the series of the patriarchs *upwards*, their births will stand opposite to



the dates of *Jewish history* in the following list. The patriarchal dates are from the Septuagint. The Jewish dates are from the chronology inserted (chiefly from Usher) in our Bibles, which has thus received the sanction of the Church, and is unshaken in all its more important points from Abraham downwards. In this part there could have been no object in the corruption of the text, and it has remained pure. The system proposed by Hales, when he loses sight of the Septuagint, seems too gratuitous to be relied on.

\* *The Patriarchal Generations.*

Seth . . .	205, corresponding to B. c. 1962 <sup>1</sup>
Enos . . .	190 . . . . . 1757

<sup>1</sup> The only difficulty lies in the instance of Abraham, we having no Scriptural evidence of his age at the time of his *first* call (Acts vii. 2) from Ur of the Chaldees. He was seventy-five years old when he received his second call and departed from Haran, which Usher fixes at B. c. 1922. If he had received the original call forty years before, which is not more improbable than that Moses should have been impelled into the desert, doubtless by the Divine will, and have abandoned the Egyptian court forty years before he became a declared instrument in the Divine hand, this would bring the date of his first emigration to B. c. 1962; the period corresponding to that of the commencement of the generation of Shem. But the subsequent periods are matters of more accurate knowledge.

The value of the evidence is to be found in its *general* view, in the extraordinary coincidence which prevails through the *entire of both series*, and in the striking application of the

Cainan . .	170, corresponding to B. c.	1567	
Mehalalech .	165 . . . . .	1397	
Jared . . .	162 . . . . .	1232	
Enoch . . .	165 . . . . .	1070	
Methuselah .	187 . . . . .	905	
Lamech . . .	188 . . . . .	718	
Noah to the } Deluge . . . }	600      The fall of Jeru- salem A. D. 70 }	530+70	

## SETH.

The name of Seth is interpreted *The Appointed*. The period of his generation is 205 years. In the corresponding 205 years of the Jewish history (from B. c. 1962 to 1757), Abraham is called from Ur of the Chaldees; he is again called in his 75th year; and he enters into covenant with God, and is *appointed* the father of

patriarchal *names* to the fortunes of the corresponding periods of Judea. Four or five years, more or less, are nothing in a scale of hundreds, peculiarly in the general difficulty existing as to the *exact* dates, in all the chronological systems.

The providential reason why Seth is placed at the head of the Ante-diluvian Church seems to be, that he was given, as Eve declares, "*instead* of Abel whom Cain slew"—a substitute for the former head of the line in which the Messiah was to come. Cain was lost, and for this purpose non-existent. Adam, though the universal progenitor, had been made for the head of the Paradisaic Church, probably a state of things essentially different—a state of unsinning obedience, a Church *without* sacrifice. Of him we hear no more. Seth was the head of the Church of sacrifice.

the chosen people, head of the Church on earth, and progenitor of the Messiah. His whole career, and that of his son Isaac, the child of promise, is marked by an especial *appointment* for planting the Church in the world.

ENOS (*Despairing*)—a period of 190 years. .

From B. C. 1757 to 1567.—In 1760 Jacob begins his pilgrimage by flying into Mesopotamia to escape the resentment of his brother. His whole life is marked with trouble. “Few and evil have the years of my life been,” is his own description towards its close. But his descendants fall into still deeper trial. The concluding years of the period find them in the Egyptian captivity, the people broken, the worship suspended, the national characteristics slavery and *despair*.

CAINAN—(*possession*)—a period of 170 years.

From B. C. 1567 to 1397.—In 1571 Moses is born, to become the future deliverer of Israel. He rescues the people from their slavery, re-establishes the Church, and leads the nation to the conquest of Canaan; of which his successor, under the direct guidance of Heaven, puts them

in *possession*. The close of the period completes the triumphs of Joshua.

MAHALEEL—(*praising God*)—a period of 165 years.

From B. C. 1397 to 1232.—In 1405 Othniel begins the line of the Judges after Joshua. During this period the fortunes of the nation are diversified. They fall into partial idolatries, and are scourged by partial punishments. But the general commonwealth is prosperous, a succession of leaders are raised by Heaven, who repel the national enemies: the great characteristic of the period is the *prevalence of religion*. The government is the theocracy. God is the acknowledged Sovereign of the nation. Israel is memorable among nations for its *praise of God*. The period closes with the usurpation of Abimelech, the beginning of an evil time,—the first violation of the theocracy.

JARED. (*Descending*) a period of 162 years.

From B. C. 1232 to 1070. In this year the government of the Judges is resumed, Abimelech having been slain the year before. But, the whole period is one of *national decline*. The Israelites are delivered, for their growing corruptions, into

the hands of the Philistines. The Israelite armies are defeated, and the *Ark* is taken. The theocracy ends; and the period closes with the harassed reign of Saul, of whom God says to Israel, "I gave thee a King in mine anger, and took him away in my wrath<sup>1</sup>."

ENOCH (*Dedicated*), a period of 165 years.

From B.C. 1070 to 905.—In 1063 Samuel is sent to Bethlehem to anoint David, as King. Israel suddenly recovers its strength, on the cessation of idolatry; and conquers the whole of the promised land for the first time. David ascends the throne, and proposes to build the temple. In 1012 Solomon lays the foundation of the temple, and in 1004 celebrates its *dedication*, the glory of the Lord descending to declare its acceptance: the period extends to Jehoshaphat, who, overthrowing the Pagan altars, renews the general worship of the Lord.

METHUSELAH (*Sending death*), a period of 187 years.

From B.C. 905 to 718.—This period comprehends the *decline and ruin* of the kingdom of Israel. About 906 the miracle of Elijah's sacrifice was given as a warning to the idolatrous

<sup>1</sup> Hosea xiii. 10.

nation and their King Ahab. In 721 the *captivity of Hosea and the ten tribes by Shalmanezzer began*. This calamity was *final*.

LAMECH (*Stricken*), a period of 182 years.

From B.C. 718 to 530.—This period comprehends the moral decline, the successive overthrow, and the *Babylonish captivity* of the kingdom of Judah. In 1713 the war began, by the invasion of Sennacherib, who desolated the territory. After successive invasions, Jerusalem was taken by Nebuchadnezzar, the people were borne into Assyrian bondage, and the land was given to strangers. The ruin was complete, yet not *final*. At the close of the period, an extraordinary deliverance was to come.

NOAH (*the Comforter*). a period of 600 years.

From B.C. 530 to A.D. 70.—The name of Noah was declared to be prophetic. It was given by Lamech to his son, in the knowledge, that in his time there should be given a *rest* to the people of God. “He shall *comfort* us concerning our work and toil of our hands, because of the ground which the Lord hath cursed<sup>1</sup>. In 536 the fortunes of the captive people underwent one of the

<sup>1</sup> Gen. v. 29.

most memorable changes in history. In that year the famous decree of Cyrus was issued, by which they were restored to their country, and empowered to rebuild their temple. The general character of this period was that of a renewal of national strength. Judæa was a bond slave no longer, her polity was restored, her temple was rebuilt, and before the close of the period, the Messiah, the ancient and prophetic hope of Israel, and mankind, was born.

But the exactness of the correspondence in the two series is still more remarkably exhibited in this instance. Shem, that Son of Noah, who was to be the head of the chosen line, was born a hundred years before the deluge. The name is interpreted *Renown*. It will be observed that the most striking portion of the corresponding six hundred years is that included within the *last hundred*. Judæa had been harassed by faction and war, to the verge of ruin the century before. The ravages of Epiphanes and Eupator had apparently dried up the last sources of the national strength. Jerusalem had subsequently been captured by the Romans, and the nation made tributary. Yet, at the commencement of the final century of national existence, Judæa started up into a sudden dignity and splendour unequalled from the days of Solomon.

In B. C. 37, Herod was put in full possession of his kingdom; and, defeating all his rivals, and reconciling the powerful interest of Rome, began a

career of singular prosperity.\* He gave the country an established rank once more. He was among the wealthiest, most powerful, and most magnificent princes of his time. But the great feature of his fame was the rebuilding, or rather the new erection, of the Temple. This was a source of individual honour which might have been envied by all the Jewish kings since its first founder. It was a peculiar source of national pride, and made the name of Herod and his country conspicuous throughout the world. But that Temple was also the source of a still higher national honour: it saw the living presence of HIM, whose emblematic glory alone had shone on the Temple of the son of David. Those were the years of the true *renown* of Judah: external and acknowledged splendour to the eye of all; spiritual lustre to the eye of those who “waited for the promise of Israel.”

But the correspondence is not limited to this outline. In the degenerate day of the sons of Seth, a Divine warning had been given, that long-suffering was exhausted, and that there would be an end of their existence, within a hundred and twenty years. It will be found that a similar warning was given to the Jews in their degenerate day. In the year B.C. 63, Jerusalem was, for the *first time*, captured by the Romans, under Pompey, exactly one hundred and twenty-three years before the day of its final war (reckoning from the tumult in Cæsarea, A.D. 60, which was



the origin of the war). Nothing could be more fitted to awake the Jew to his fate. The determination of Rome to possess universal empire, was fully known ; the Jewish nation once in its grasp, was sure to be finally extinguished in the general mass of Roman power. That grasp was rapidly tightened on Judæa, and the Jew saw the independence of his country sinking hour by hour, into the hands of that people, whom their “ strange speech,” so alien to the Oriental ear, their inveterate and repulsive idolatry, their habitual love of the sword, and their severe extortion, stamped as the final destroyer declared in the prophecies ; as the conquerors more sweeping and remorseless than Babylon, to avenge crimes deeper than those which had broken the strength of Judah before the cavalry and chariots of the great Eastern invaders ; as the fixers of that chain which was to fasten the neck of Judah to the ground, in a captivity reckoned, not by years, but ages.

The building of the ark for the preservation of the patriarchal family, was a peculiar feature of the last days of the ante-diluvian world. The last days of Judah witnessed a not less peculiar and literal preservation of the small household of faith, the few who adhered to the *true* worship of Israel. Forty years before the catastrophe, the whole Jewish people were earnestly appealed to, to escape from the impending danger. A prophet was sent to command the nation “ to flee from the

wrath to come," temporal as well as eternal. The appeal was listened to with general interest, yet soon forgotten. An ark, the Christian Church, was next built before their eyes, and the declaration solemnly made, that, to all who entered it, it should be a place of perfect safety; that "not a hair of their heads should perish." The promise was kept to the letter. Those who entered it were saved, in body, as in spirit. Amid the general ruin which overwhelmed the nation, the individuals who took shelter in the Church of the Gospel, the Christians, were carried secure through this new deluge of fire and sword; and, when the devastation was done, were sent forth to be the spiritual regenerators of the world.

## CHAPTER XVII.

### THE POST-DILUVIAN PATRIARCHS.

THE coincidence of the post-diluvian generations with the events of the similar periods in European history, is sustained with equal clearness. Arphaxad, the son of Shem, was born two years after the deluge (corresponding to A. D. 72). The deluge and the fall of Jerusalem being still taken as corresponding events, his generation, or the period between his birth and that of his first-born, is, by the Septuagint, 135 years; bringing the close of the period, in the corresponding series, to A. D. 207; and so of the rest:—

Arphaxad	.	.	135 years, corresponding to A. D.	207
Salah	.	.	130	337
Eber	.	.	134	471
Peleg	.	.	130	601
Reu	.	.	132	733
Serug	.	.	130	863
Nahor	.	.	79	942
Terah	.	.	70	1012

With the period of Terah, the old dispensation

is closed ; and the new, under the appointment of Abraham, begins.

ARPHAXAD (*the healer*), a period of 135 years.

FROM A.D. 72 to 207.—The first two centuries of the Christian era exhibited the successful struggles of Christianity ; especially when, by *the fall of the Jewish nation*, its most inveterate antagonists were disabled. The period was in general a time of persecution, but of persecution which at once invigorated the zeal and purified the tenets of the Christian. After the capture of Jerusalem, conversion had begun its full course ; and the Church, under all its trials, spread through the empire<sup>1</sup>. The religion, whose especial and prophetic character it was, to come with *healing on its wings*, the “ *healer of the broken-hearted and the deliverer of such as were bound,*” now passed the limits of the empire, and was preached through the ends of the earth. Paganism was palpably perishing before it, and nothing but the violent opposition of the Pagan emperors, and the strong interests connected with the support of the Pagan hierarchy,

<sup>1</sup> “ Before the close of the second century, Christ was worshipped as God almost throughout the *whole East*, as also among the Germans, Spaniards, Celts, Britons, and many other nations. The writers of this century attribute this rapid progress of Christianity to the *power of God*.” (Mosheim i. 135.)

were capable of checking its immediate progress to the full possession of the national mind.

SALAH<sup>1</sup> (*Mission*), a period of 130 years.

From A.D. 207 to 337.—This period, reaching from the commencement of the third century, the reign of Severus, to nearly the middle of the fourth, comprehends the great triumph of Christianity. The vigorous domination of Severus had

<sup>1</sup> The Septuagint is followed in the entire of the series, except in this instance. It places a *second* Cainan between Arphaxad and Salah. But this Cainan is considered by Hales, and the important authorities which he cites, to be a mere interpolation; for the *name* is not found in the Hebrew, which is an omission of a very different nature from the subtraction of years from a name acknowledged by both the original and the translation. It is *not mentioned* in the chronologies of Philo or Josephus, nor by Theophilus of Antioch, in his list of the post-diluvian Patriarchs, nor by Origen, Eusebius, Jerome, nor even by the Septuagint itself in its repetition of the genealogies. (1 *Chronic.* l. 24.)

We are fully warranted to conclude, from this combination of evidence, that the second Cainan was not originally in the Hebrew, nor in the Septuagint (Hales). Its interpolation is referred by Gregory of Oxford to the artifices of the Chiliasts. The introduction of the name into the genealogy in St. Luke is, of course, equally an interpolation. But the perfect coincidence of the series in its present state with the corresponding periods of the Christian era, may be entitled to decide the question of authority, and establish the *omission* of the name.

restored the fortunes of the empire ; but the restoration seemed only to provide strength for its endurance of a series of civil convulsions, unequalled in the wildest times of history. From his death in A.D. 222 to the close of the century the whole empire was torn by furious factions, and competitors for the throne. Paganism was signaling her last struggles by inflicting havoc on mankind. The Church, the great *Mission*, commanded to go forth and convert all nations, was fiercely persecuted ; but it still advanced, until in A.D. 306, a succession of victories, the last of which was gained under the actual banner of the cross, placed Constantine on the throne, and established Christianity as the religion of the civilized world. The death of Constantine, in A.D. 337, closed the period.

EBER (*passage*), a period of 134 years.

From A.D. 337 to 471.—Constantine had left an universal Church and an empire stretching over the finest regions of the globe. But an extraordinary change was to come, almost within a single life. The Church was suddenly torn with heresies ; the empire was shaken to its foundations by the first attacks of the northern invaders. All was now passing away from the hands of Rome ; the Italian provinces were seized by barbarians, the whole empire was in a state of transition into the

power of the savages of Scandinavia and Tartary. Towards the middle of the fifth century, it was evidently beyond the hope of retrieval. "In A.D. 476, the last Emperor abandoned the throne, and the empire of the west finally *passed away*.

PELEG (*Division*), a period of 130 years.

From A.D. 471 to 601.—This period comprehends the settlement of the Barbarians in Europe, and its *partition* among the various tribes. The name of Peleg had been given, as an express *prediction*, that in his time the earth should be *divided*. The name was equally applicable to the corresponding series. In the fifth and sixth centuries, the Western Empire, comprehending the chief part of the civilized world, was *divided* into separate sovereignties; and the Division, in all its more conspicuous parts, has continued to this hour.

REU (*the Shepherd*), a period of 130 years.

From A.D. 601 to 733.—To all human apprehension, Empire had now seen its last change. But the 130 years, comprehended in this period, exhibited a shape of sovereign power hitherto unknown to mankind—a Church assuming the sceptre.

The feebleness of the Greek empire had gradually suffered the transfer of a large share of its western authority into the hands of the Bishop of

Rome. At length, on the question of removing images from the Romish altars, the Bishop revolted in A.D. 728, and commenced the possession of independent sovereignty. He declared himself head of the Church, and "*Universal Shepherd*," in right of St. Peter, to whom had been given the especial charge—"feed my sheep." The Roman PASTOR rapidly became the spiritual monarch of the western world.

But the period of this Patriarch contains another instance of parallelism of a not less memorable kind. About the seventieth year of Reu<sup>1</sup>, a tribe of Cushites, idolators, invaded the land of Shinaar, made themselves masters of its territory, the inheritance of the family of Shem; and at length absorbed them into their nation. The Cushite leader was Nimrod, a "mighty hunter," a man who had probably risen to the chieftainship by superior boldness in the chase, but now a conqueror, and ambitious of building a city, which should prevent the dispersion of his tribe, and become the permanent seat of empire. What years his conquest occupied, or how long the building of the city and citadel was carried on, we are not told; but his project was frustrated by a direct interposition of Providence,—a confusion

<sup>1</sup> The chronology in our Bibles places the building of Babel sixteen years before the birth of Reu; but Hales adduces the authority of Abulfaragi, and other sufficient arguments, for fixing it at the date here given. Vol. ii. 43.



of tongues. Yet, though the *progress* of the building was prohibited; the city, and the tower which was to rival the heavens, stood<sup>1</sup>. The Cushite empire, already largely spreading over Asia, soon perished; but Babylon itself assumed a superiority of a distinct species—it became the central place of idolatry, the head of heathenism.

If it should be asked, why the chosen race, the ancestors of Abraham, were suffered to fall under such a domination? the probable answer is to be found in those dealings of Providence with them in later ages, by which their tendency to idolatrous worship, or national corruption, was left to find its punishment at the hands of idolatrous invaders. Whatever might be the source, the Arphaxadites had become idolators<sup>2</sup>.

The corresponding portion of European history exhibits a complete coincidence. The erection of images on the Christian altars, had been stealing on the Eastern and Western Churches, since the sixth century. At length the Emperor Leo issued

<sup>1</sup> The Pagan traditions of the *overthrow* of Babel by lightning from heaven, are unsustained by Scripture. All that is told there is—"The Lord scattered the builders abroad upon the face of all the earth, and they *left off to build the city*." (Gen. xi. 8.) Nothing is said of its demolition.

<sup>2</sup> This is the declaration of Joshua to the people of Shechem. "Thus saith the Lord God of Israel, Your fathers dwelt on the other side of the flood (the river) in old time; Terah, the father of Abraham, and the father of Nahor, and *they served other gods*." (Josh. xxiv. 2.)

a decree against the practice as idolatrous. Gregory, the Bishop of Rome, resented this ordinance, revolted, convoked a council of ninety-three bishops, declared himself the protector of images, and pronounced a general excommunication against the image-breakers, A.D. 728. The schism was final.

But another power was soon to be in the field. Charles Martel, in the beginning of the same century, had laid the foundation of his family by his eminence as a military leader. Gregory the First solicited his assistance against the Lombards. Thus the connexion was formed between the Popedom and the Carlovingian dynasty; which continued, with increasing closeness, until they were all but identified by the crowning of Charlemagne at Rome, in A. D. 800.

In return, the Emperor gave the territory of the Exarchate to the Popedom; thus founding the *temporal* sovereignty, the commencement of that extraordinary combination of spiritual and temporal power, which claimed the authority of a god on earth, and commanded that its decrees should be revered as the Divine—the spiritual city and tower were built, whose height assumed to rival heaven. The empire of Charlemagne, sanctioned and aided by the Papal influence, now threatened to absorb the world. It had already spread over the West. Charlemagne ruled at once Germany, Hungary, France, Italy,

and Spain : and no power existed within or without the confines of Europe, capable of contesting his supremacy. Yet this enormous mass of force dissolved away with the most memorable rapidity. After a short period of convulsion, the whole frame sank, and within forty years it was broken up by a partition between the sons of Louis, the immediate descendants of the Emperor, and this division was rendered complete and perpetual by a *division of language* !

The Latin had been the universal, authorized language of the empire ; and the Papacy, by refusing to suffer its worship to be celebrated in any other tongue, has, in all ages, laboured to retain its universality. But Germany, France, and Italy, the three new sovereignties, had no sooner ceased to be under one sceptre, than they reverted to their original dialects, or formed new, by their mixture with the Latin. The great districts of Europe thus became speedily unintelligible to each other. Europe was a *confusion of tongues*. The habits, feelings, and even the difficulties of intercourse, growing out of this root of separation, in fierce and semi-barbarous times operated as a complete barrier to reunion. It has never been overcome. No individual has ever again permanently combined the three countries under one sceptre : the only two great efforts in modern history were soon discomfited : and where the power and perseverance of Charles the Fifth,

and the subtilty, reckless ambition, and fiery intrepidity, of Napoleon, failed to establish an universal empire, we may regard it henceforth as beyond the achievement of man.

But while the empire of Europe was divided, the sovereignty of Rome stood. The Carolingian dynasty was the “mighty hunter,” the resistless military power, which at the head of its armed tribes built its Babel on the sacred soil. That soil had already deserved the desecration. Rome had already avowed her strongest adherence to the veneration of images. Gregory the Second, in the rescript by which he renounced his allegiance to the Greek emperor, had gone to the extremes of the doctrine. “The eyes of the nations of the West,” was his astonishing declaration, “*revere as a god upon earth*”<sup>1</sup> the Apostle St. Peter, whose image you threaten to destroy. The remote and interior kingdoms of the West present their homage to Christ and *his vicegerent*. The barbarians have submitted to the yoke of the Gospel, while you alone are deaf to the voice of the SHEPHERD,” &c.

Rome, from that period, has been the acknowledged head of that form of Christianity which places the images of the saints upon its altars.

<sup>1</sup> The words are, “Οι αι πασαι βασιλειαί της δυσσεως ως Θεον επιγειον εχουσι.” The two Epistles of Gregory have been preserved in the Acts of the Nicene Council, vol. iii. p. 551. quoted by Gibbon, vol. v.

The parallelism is sustained in all its points. The check of the great temporal empire was complete; it never advanced after the building of the Popedom. It is also remarkable, that vast as was the influence of the Popedom, even to the extent of dethroning kings and distributing kingdoms, its progress as a temporal power was equally stopped. Often grasping fiercely at territory, and mingling in all the game of European ambition, it has always remained one of the smallest territorial powers, and in the long lapse of a thousand years, has scarcely been able to set its foot beyond its original confines.

In all prophecies, what is unequivocally begun is looked on as complete. The connection of the Popedom with the Carlovingian family, which was carried into the ninth century, had *unequivocally begun in the eighth*, and thenceforth continued unbroken until the close of the dynasty.

SERUG (*branching*), a period of 130 years.

From A.D. 733 to 863.—This was peculiarly the era of *conversion*. A sudden desire of bringing the Pagans of the North and West within the pale of the Church sprang up in the princes and priesthood; the impulse, partly honest zeal, partly angry policy; and the instrument, alternately the Scriptures and the sword. Charlemagne's long-sighted sagacity had seen the dangers which

threatened the coasts of his empire from the Baltic tribes, and wisely conjectured that the best security for their adoption of peaceful habits was their receiving Christianity. He sent monks and bishops among them, but the rudeness and cruelty of the barbarians repelled the efforts of those missionaries. He followed them with armies, and made a general war on the North in 772. This unhalloed system of conversion was continued, though with decreasing violence, by his successors. Yet amid much ambition, much guilt, and much folly, there were strong instances of genuine zeal, attended by indisputable success. Christianity *branched* out largely among the savage tribes which still surrounded the frontiers of the empire. The celebrated Boniface, named the “apostle of Germany,” established missions among the tribes of Hesse and Thuringia, and laboured among them until his death, in 755. The Huns in the provinces bordering the Danube, were partially brought to the baptismal font ; the Bohemians and Moravians followed the example. Ansgar and Authbert preached the Gospel to the people of Cimbria and Jutland in 826 ; Ansgar preached to the Swedes in 828, and finally establishing the church in Denmark and Sweden, concluded a life of indefatigable labour in 865. The Mœsians and Bulgarians were converted by Methodius and Cyril, two Greek monks, sent on the mission by the Empress Theodora. In the reign of Basilus,

Emperor in 867, the Sclavonians, Arentani, and a part of Dalmatia, sent a formal embassy to Constantinople, declaring their desire to embrace Christianity; but the same emperor saw a still more extensive conversion made, in the acceptance of the Gospel by the warlike, and even then powerful nation of the Russians, who but a short time before had sent a fleet from Kiow, which struck terror into Constantinople.

“ It is proper to observe,” says Mosheim, “ with respect to those various conversions, that they were undertaken upon *much better principles*, and executed in a *more pious and rational manner*, than those of the preceding ages. The ministers who were now sent to instruct and convert the barbarous nations, did not, like many of their predecessors, employ the terror of penal laws, to affright men into the profession of Christianity: nor, in establishing churches on the ruins of idolatry, were they principally attentive to *promote the grandeur, and extend the authority of the Roman Pontiffs*. Their views were more noble, and their conduct was more suitable to the genius of the religion which they professed. They had chiefly in view the happiness of mankind, endeavoured to promote the gospel of truth and peace by rational persuasion, and seconded their arguments by the victorious power of exemplary lives.”—(*Eccles. History*, vol. ii. 253.) He admits that their doctrine often partook of the general ignorance of the age.

But their intentions were often as pure as their zeal was inexhaustible. At the close of this period, nearly all the Pagan tribes of Europe possessed at least a general knowledge of the tenets of the Christian religion. This knowledge had hitherto been concentrated round the cities, and chief places of civilization, it now *shot out its branches*, through the whole barbarian border of Europe.

It might be presumed that this work of peace would be followed by the general tranquillity and prosperity of the European nations. But such was not the will of Heaven. A punishment, fully deserved, was first to be inflicted. The characteristic name of the next period was one of Divine displeasure ; and the prophecy was fully borne out by the execution.

NAHOR (*angry*), a period of 79 years. .

From A.D. 863. to 942.—This was peculiarly the *age of European suffering*. From the memorable division of the empire under the sons of Louis Le Debonnaire, in A.D. 840, a general decay of government had prevailed through Europe. The power of Charlemagne no longer existing to restrain either his subjects or his enemies, the barons assumed independence, and used it, to make war upon each other. While the subjects revolted, the enemies revenged. The northern nations,



whom Charlemagne had coerced only by a war of six and thirty years, recovered their vigour, and poured down upon the defenceless shores of the west and south. The Danish and Scandinavian pirates swept the seas. The Normans ravaged the interior, and in A.D. 918, had already formed settlements in Italy, Sicily, and France. The scenes of rapine which followed the fall of the Roman Empire, seemed to be renewed by the incursions which had thus followed the division of the Empire of Charlemagne. “Those were times of great misery to the world, and *perhaps the worst* that Europe has ever known<sup>1</sup>.” Germany, Gaul, and Britain were ravaged by them. The impetuous fury of those savages not only spread devastation through the Spanish provinces, but penetrated into the heart of Italy. An equally savage enemy, the Saracens, who had seized Sicily in 827, about the commencement of this period invaded the south of Europe<sup>2</sup>. A new army of those enemies to Europe and Christianity poured from Asia into the provinces and islands of the south, and ravaged up to the walls of Rome. The scourge was heavily laid on ; but it was amply deserved by the wilful ignorance, boundless profligacy, and lavish and audacious superstition, of the era. The veneration of saints, and the invention of new forms of homage to

<sup>1</sup> Hallam. Hist. Midd. Ages.

<sup>2</sup> Mosheim, vol. ii. 254.

relics, flourished ; while, on the other hand, all public life was war and treason, and all private life licentiousness and perfidy. To man, society must have seemed on the point of ruin ; but the prediction had been uttered three thousand years before, which declared it to be on the point of restoration.

**TERAH** (*breathing*), a period of 70 years.

From A. D. 942 to 1012.—The preceding period was the midnight of the dark ages. The whole Christian world lay in a state of the most extraordinary desolation. The Scriptures had nearly disappeared. At long intervals, in the 9th century, some remarkable men, Claude of Turin and others, had protested against the errors of the national worship ; but it was not till the tenth that the protest bore a permanent form. In the middle of that century, the Paulicians, a sect who professed to take the Bible alone as their guide, appeared in the West. Their first efforts were in Italy, from which they sent forth missionaries, preaching the Scriptures. Though stigmatized as Manichæans, a charge which they always repelled as an utter calumny, they made numerous converts. At length their progress in France attracted the eye of the Government, and persecution was let loose against them. They were found guilty of disclaiming the use of images, of denying the

right of the Papacy to temporal power, and of propagating the Scriptures. They at length began to make converts among the higher orders of the French clergy; and direct vengeance followed. "The first religious assembly which the Paulicians (openly) formed in Europe, was at Orleans, in 1017. Its principal members were twelve canons of the Cathedral, distinguished for their piety and learning; and it was composed, in general, of a number of citizens, who were far from being of the meanest condition. King Robert held a council, and striving in vain to bring back the canons, ordered them to be buried alive<sup>1</sup>." Thus the purer form of Christianity in Europe was begun; the spirit which our Lord had given by *breathing*, the *πνεῦμα*, was, during this period, especially *breathed* upon the West. It is remarkable that the original seat of the Paulicians was, like that of Abraham, in Chaldæa.

<sup>1</sup> Mosheim (*Eccl. Hist.* v. 2. 524.)

The case is still stronger, by taking the true date of the birth of Abraham. The Septuagint gives the date of the birth of Terah's first-born. But Abraham was probably his youngest son, and must have been born in his 130th year; as is evident from the date of Terah's death, in his 205th year (*Gen. xi. 32.*), at which time Abraham was 75 years old (*Gen. xii. 4.*) This would add 60 years to the corresponding period; which would close at A. D. 1072. But the coincidence would be only strengthened by the addition; for the doctrines of the Reformers advanced continually through the 11th century.

In this contrast of the patriarchal and Jewish eras, evidence is obtained, which throws the strongest light on the Divine authority of revelation. The process and the materials are equally plain. The process is that of mere juxta-position; the materials are the facts of common history. The translations of the names are not made for the purpose; but are those familiar to every one acquainted with the original. The dates of the periods are those given in the most common authority on the subject, the chronology used in our Church<sup>1</sup>. But the conclusion is one of the very highest importance. It is a *new* and irresistible proof of the particular and constant action of Providence in the affairs of men. The correspondence of the two dispensations is throughout of the most complete order: not founded on a few occasional similarities of action, but close and consecutive, without a single interval, during *four thousand years*. The parallelism is tried under all conceivable vicissitudes of national character and national fortune. Yet the prophetic names are still true to their purpose; and so true, that

<sup>1</sup> No known system of chronology can be relied on for the *precise years* of the leading events. If a more exact system should hereafter be discovered, it might bring those events still more accurately to the points of time marked in the parallelism; but those minor discrepancies cannot be in question on a *scale* of thousands of years. The *whole periods* and their *general character* are the true objects to be considered.

we might even now adopt them to class those vicissitudes, for the purposes of history.

Why those names were ever given to the patriarchal line, had hitherto been a matter of perplexity<sup>1</sup>. Or, if the names of Cain, Abel, and Seth, might refer to their individual circumstances, and those of Noah and Peleg to the circumstances of the world; what could be the ground for such a succession of epithets, as “despairing,” “possessing,” “praising,” “descending,” “devoting,” “dying,” &c., among the pious and protected sons of the chosen line? Could they be thus given down for their designation of the individual career of a rude and simple race, whose lives have furnished no proof to us that the designation was ever realized; who probably passed from the cradle to the grave in the uniformity and quiet of a small and guarded colony; and of whom we know scarcely more, than that they were born, and died<sup>2</sup>.

<sup>1</sup> The names of the direct line of Cain are equally given, but without dates; and the succession is broken off long before the deluge. For the names, the succession, and its fracture, a sufficient reason is discoverable. *They are the history of heathenism.*

<sup>2</sup> Among the minor yet striking results of the parallelism, is its confirmation of events of such remarkable interest, yet so frequently the subject of rash scepticism, as the division of the earth among the post-diluvian families; the building of Babel; and the confusion of tongues. Their strong correspondence with events in known and accessible history, takes them out of the remoteness and obscurity in which they are necessarily left by the brief narrative of Scripture.

## CHAPTER XVIII.

### THE PATRIARCHAL LINE.

THE exile of Cain and the death of Abel had given the eldership of the family to Seth. By him it was transmitted to his eldest born, Enos. We have no reason to conceive that a name so descriptive of calamity was applicable to either the patriarch or his time. He was probably distinguished for piety; for it is recorded of him that, "in his days men began to call upon the name of the Lord<sup>1</sup>." To their sacrifices they had

<sup>1</sup> This expression, of "calling upon the name of the Lord," has been perplexed by the commentators (Bishop Patrick and others), who, in their reluctance to admit that public worship could have been so long delayed, conceive it to have been merely a declaration on the part of the Sethites, that they were "the sons of God." Yet this would be an act of presumption of which we have no example in religious history. That the Church might subsequently obtain the name from the historian, is a separate question.

But we have no right, for any fancied inconvenience, to stray from the common meaning of Scripture. The phrase of "calling on the name of the Lord," is not unfrequent in Scripture;

now added a new form of approach to the Deity, public prayer. Of the successive heads of the

and it uniformly implies addressing him by some *formal* acknowledgment of his Being, as in prayer. The original act of homage was sacrifice, an act chiefly connected with the offerer himself, as an atonement for individual sin. There is nothing inconsistent in supposing that the idea of public prayer, as a general acknowledgment of the power and beneficence of the Deity, might be the subsequent offering of minds more awakened to a sense of His spiritual nature. In the patriarchal history, we find the sacrifice, and the worship by prayer, sufficiently contradistinguished. When Abraham sacrificed at Bethel, we are told he also "called on the name of the Lord," (Gen. xii. 8), an act evidently not included in the mention of "sacrifice." When Isaac sacrificed at Gerar, he also "called on the name of the Lord" (Gen. xxvi. 25). Those acts of worship were doubtless public. In the offering of Cain and Abel, we have an example of the sacrifice without the prayer. In the Apostle's definition of the Church, "Those who call upon the name of the Lord" (1 Cor. i. 2), we have an example of the prayer without the sacrifice. The question is of some moment, as showing the conformity of the narrative to nature. Private prayer is almost an instinct; but public prayer, the assembling of many together for the purposes of joint supplication, is naturally the work of a later impression; of a community of thought, produced by an extension of intercourse, by a larger diffusion of religious feeling, by the necessity of preserving the standard of faith, and, probably, by some growing evidence of the necessity of a more distinct testimonial to the faith. All those circumstances would be the natural result of the position of the Sethites. In the beginning, prayer might be solitary; but when their numbers increased, and, of course, separated more widely from the immediate instruction of the patriarch, some substitute might naturally be sought in the

generations, down to Enoch, nothing is recorded, but the years. But of Enoch the two memorable facts transpire, that he prophesied the infliction of the Divine vengeance<sup>1</sup>, and that he passed away from earth without having tasted of the grave.

Methuselah, Lamech, and Noah, complete the series of the ante-diluvian Patriarchs. The name of Noah was given as a declared *prediction* of events still distant 600 years. Nothing could be less within the limits of human sagacity; for it comprehended universal ruin, the restoration of the world, the sovereignty of the Sethites over that world, the supremacy of religion, and the formation of a totally new frame of society; the general building up of the great commonwealth of the sons of the patriarch, distending into mankind.

It is probable that, in the time of Lamech, the guilt of the earth had greatly increased, for the

instruction given to the whole at regulated intervals, by a form of worship, which brought them all together. The increasing population and profligacy of the Cainite tribes might also render this precaution valuable, at once as an antidote to their example, and a protest against their infidelity.

<sup>1</sup> "Behold, the Lord cometh, with ten thousand of his saints." (Jude, 14.) This has been supposed to be an extract from the Apocryphal book of Enoch. (*Sherlock, Lardner, &c.*) But we dishonour inspiration by supposing that it could borrow from a work of vulgar fable. Why should not the much more natural circumstance have been the true; that the forger borrowed a fragment of genuine prediction to give credit to his fable?



Divine promise, is seldom given until its consolation is required. As the colonies of the Cainites swelled in numbers, they naturally grew in violence. A race of wild and scattered settlers in the mountains and forests of the desert world ; they may have strongly resembled in the ferocity of their customs, the narrowness of their inventions, and their intractable barbarism, the rovers of the Arabian or Tartar wildernesses. All inquiry has failed to discover that they had any religion, even idolatry ; or any government, beyond some rude submission to chieftains, who led them to mutual slaughter. In the increasing degeneracy of the earth, when the intermarriage of the Sethites with the Cainite tribes had extinguished the last purpose for which the earth had been preserved, those chieftains assume a more prominent part. They are characterized as “ giants,” “ mighty men,” “ men of renown :” three characters which easily combine in the early periods of society. Bodily strength and fierce courage are the great materials of distinction in savage life. Every barbarian era has had its Hercules ; and the chiefs of the ante-diluvian world are pictured only as possessing the qualities which have always led to barbarian renown <sup>1</sup>.

<sup>1</sup> Heidegger, in his chapter on the giants (the *Nephilim*) (נפיל) (cecidit,—ruit) gives at length the opinions on the subject. Some consider the name to imply nothing more than violence,

The earth was now hurrying on to vengeance. The single restraint of universal corruption was lost in the guilty marriages of the chosen race, the "Sons of God<sup>1</sup>," with the descendants of Cain. Life was shared between violence and voluptuousness. Even the discovery of the arts of music, and the working of metals, invaluable to a race of pure and intelligent habits, may have only

ambition, or courage, &c.; but it is clear that the Jews understood by it, remarkable strength and stature. The men sent by Joshua to view Canaan returned terrified at the strength and size of the people. "All the people that we saw in it are men of a great stature; and there we saw the giants (*Nephilim*), the sons of Anak, which came of the (*Nephilim*); and we were in our own sight as *grasshoppers*."

Yet we cannot reason from the existence of gigantic individuals, or even of gigantic races, to the general stature of mankind. From the size of ancient tombs, the Egyptian mummies, and the remnants of ancient armour, we have *proof* that the general size of man has been the same, as far back as human record; but we, perhaps, have an evidence extending to all ages, in the size of the animals intended for human use. We can scarcely suppose that they have followed the descending stature of man; yet the horse, &c. of our time would be useless to a world peopled with giants. The mere fact of the distinction obtained by gigantic strength and stature is an argument that they were *not* general.

<sup>1</sup> The Rabbinical fables formed on the supposed intercourse of angels with human beings, are sufficiently known. The title of "Sons of God" may have been applied to the Sethites, not only as the chosen line, but as descendants of Adam, who is termed the "Son of God." Luke iii. 38. (*Lightfoot on the Genealogy.*)

added to the progress of vice and bloodshed among a race whom they supplied with new attractions in the one, and new weapons for the other. The purification of the earth by the death of those incorrigible criminals was now the Divine resolve. And the necessity of the expedient is fully justifiable on our common knowledge. The human race was vitiated by the two most engrossing and incurable corruptions of the heart of man—rapine and sensuality. The former ruinous to society, the latter to the individual; the former fatal to all the principles, the latter to all the faculties; and both, at a certain stage of their progress, equally and totally defying control; both equally amounting to a moral, often to a physical insanity, for which the only cure is the grave.

The gradations of the great catastrophe are full of solemn interest.

It was first proclaimed that the career of the earth was to be closed. The time of the destruction was *fixed*. It was to be within a hundred and twenty years! No form of warning could have struck more directly at the grand fomentor of human evil—the presumption in the mind of the criminal, that an almost unlimited existence lay before him.

A verbal warning, threatening an indefinite mode of ruin, had now been given to mankind. A *visible* warning, marking the actual mode of ruin, was to follow.

The dimensions of the ark, 300 cubits long, 50 broad, and 30 high, were so vast, that it seems to have been intended to offer safety to a number, probably equalling the whole existing tribe of the Sethites. From its form, it was not merely a *ship*, but a house, not a mere means of flight from a local danger, but a great receptacle for existence, in a deluge by which all regions of the earth were to be alike visited and undone<sup>1</sup>.

The years which the building of this enormous fabric must have occupied; the impressions which must have been made on the patriarchal tribe by the sight of their prince and his family, probably reduced to labour at the work with their own hands (for the secession of the people was, at last, total); the appeals with which the Patriarch, emphatically named “the preacher of righteousness,” must have tried to shake their desperate incredulity to the ruin, which he *knew* to be hastening hour by hour; the hoary grandeur and hereditary homage thrown round the lineal descendant of the first father of mankind, contrasted with his persevering zeal in the erection of the ark, were all instruments of that strenuous long-suffering, which stamps the ways of Heaven.

<sup>1</sup> Taking the cubit at 18 inches, the dimensions of the ark are calculated at 42,413 tons, or about the stowage of eighteen ships of the line: a space adequate not merely to carry all the animals and their provisions for a year, but fifteen or sixteen thousand people. (*Hales, &c.*)

It is observable that, during the whole long period from the Fall, the narrative retains its consistency with our common experience of the birth of evil. Personal envy first produced malice, and malice prompted to murder. The next step was the expansion of crime from the individual to the community; the progress there was from public irreligion to personal profligacy, and from personal profligacy, by a new expansion, to general violence; until the community had placed itself beyond the power of restoration. Still, an exemplary portion of mankind resisted the degeneracy. At length even that portion, abandoning its ancient barrier, and weakly, or presumptuously, exposing itself to the temptations of intercourse with apostasy, sank into the common guilt, and finally shared the common ruin. Thus the pedigree of the passions demonstrates the truth of Scripture. Thus too, the same map of crime and suffering which exhibits our world, would have exhibited the world of six thousand years ago. The great moral skeleton which we have dug from the deposits of the Flood, shows the same processes and articulations, the same sources of impulse, and liabilities to disease, which mark the configuration of human things to this hour.

The physical desolation of the Flood is to be followed in the fractures of the globe. But the moral picture is given on the highest of all autho-

rities. Our Lord, in predicting that overthrow of an infidel world, which was to succeed and consummate the wrath against Jerusalem, illustrates the eager occupation and heedless enjoyment of mankind, by the days before the Flood ; when “ they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage,” and “ knew not, until the Flood came and swept them all away<sup>1</sup>.” We have here the declaration, that the Deluge, however long threatened, had found the world still unprepared ; life in full tension, mankind busy about the same frivolous or profligate objects, till the moment, when the universal pulse stopped, the springs of the great machine were broken, the current of existence, through its thousand arteries, was chilled and stagnated for ever.

Yet, the narrative still impresses us with the idea of that long-suffering, which forms one of the most sacred characters of providential agency. It is clear that the *havoc* was not instantaneous. The rain first fell *forty days*<sup>2</sup>. The act of Him who

<sup>1</sup> Matt. xxvi.

<sup>2</sup> It would be idle, or worse, to more than advert to the objections which have been brought against the Mosaic narrative. By some modern philosophers it has been denied altogether, from their being unable “ to ascertain the origin of the waters ;” as if the same power which created, could not increase the ocean. Another class have taken up the question on its more minute features. A naturalist of some name has actually doubted the whole, on the ground of the *diversities of habitats*, “ which must render the dwelling of the polar and tropic

does nothing without a cause, and who might have submerged the world at a word ; why are we entitled to doubt that this delay was mercy ; that in this period, many a heart which had scorned the appeals of prophet and patriarch, was shaken from its incredulity by the horrors of inevitable ruin ; that thousands and tens of thousands cried from their mountain tops and forests to the high Avenger, whose clouds and thunders were stooping round them ; and that they were heard ?

But how indescribably strange, tumultuous, and terrible, must have been the sudden check and subversion of all the pursuits of life in the general world ; war, traffic, labour, festivity, all broken up together. The “man of renown,” the great barbaric chieftain, at the head of his myriads, hurrying to some new scene of spoil ; and finding himself checked in the midst of his march, by the torrents from above, and the inundations dwelling from beneath ; the long lines of primitive commerce, the rude caravans of the day, suddenly dissipated and driven to the mountains in terror ; the tillers of the soil flying from their fields, and seeing their scanty harvests buried in a moment ; The marriage and the festival ; the extravagances

animals together in the ark impossible.” As if the whole transaction were not declared to be a departure from the ordinary course of things ; a series of miraculous interferences for a purpose incapable of being accomplished but by miracle, and worthy of miracle.

of peasant revelry ; the kingly rejoicing ; the warlike triumph ; the popular acclamation ; the whole dissonant joy and turbulent emotion, the whole lavish magnificence, and profligate and prodigal energies of semi-barbarian life, suddenly dashed and suspended by a sense of universal and irresistible destruction.

Still, the Deluge was evidently gradual. Four stages of its rise are distinctly stated. First the forty days' rain—then the advance of the sea upon the land, “the waters *increased*, and bare up the ark, and it was lift up above the earth.”—Then it is told that “the waters prevailed and were *increased greatly* upon the earth.”—The final statement is, that “the waters *prevailed exceedingly* upon the earth, and all the high hills that were under the whole heaven *were covered*.” We have thus the progress of the Flood sufficiently defined by the successive periods—when the ark still remained on the ground—when it floated—when it moved from its place—and when the submergence of the globe was total, and the ark was borne wide over the face of the universal ocean. The extinction of life may have been as gradual as the rise of the waters. For it is only at the period of final submergence that the universal death is declared. “The mountains were covered, and all flesh died that moved upon the earth. All in whose nostrils was the breath of life, and all that was in the dry land, died !”



## CHAPTER XIX.

### THE SITE OF PARADISE.

THE Pagan world abounded with traditions of Paradise and the Deluge. The early legend of all the principal nations was a Golden Age, in which man was free from passion and sorrow ; followed by a gradual decline into mental and bodily ill. The Deluge had its corresponding legend. From India to Greece, all retained the confused remembrance of some vast irruption of the waters, of which the distinguishing feature was, that it had *drowned mankind* ; leaving only a few individuals, or even a solitary pair, a Deucalion and Pyrrha, to restore the world<sup>1</sup>.

But ancient literature possessed three writers, Berossus, Sanchoniatho, and Manetho, who peculiarly attempted to give those cloudy traditions, if

<sup>1</sup> On this long-laboured topic, the reader will find more than ample illustration in Maurice's rambling volumes on Hindostan, Faber's Origin of Pagan Idolatry, Bryant's rash, but sometimes ingenious, speculations on Heathen Mythology, and in the learned Miscellany of Stillingfleet.

not the substance, the shape, of history. The first was a Babylonian, and priest of Belus, who leaving Asia, lived in Cos, and propagated in Greece some of the science of his country. The fragments of his history, preserved by Josephus and Eusebius, give a statement of ten kings, or heads of families, who lived in Chaldæa before the Deluge, commencing with Alarus (Adam), and ending with Xisuthrus (Noah). Xisuthrus, having been warned in a dream by Kronos, that the earth was to be destroyed by water, built a ship, which, with the usual Oriental exaggeration, was five furlongs in length, and two in breadth. He took with him his wife, children, and friends ; sent out birds to ascertain the state of the earth as the waters subsided ; and finally found that his ship rested upon a mountain.

Sanchoniatho was the compiler of the Phœnician history, from the books of Tauth and ancient inscriptions. His only relique is also preserved by Eusebius. It relates chiefly to the line of Cain and a race of giants, whose names it gives to the mountains, Libanus, &c.

Manetho Sebennyta, the historian of Egyptian antiquity, was the high priest of Heliopolis in the time of Ptolemy Philadelphus. Of his works nothing remains, beyond a few fragments quoted from the *Chronographia* of Syncellus, from Africanus, and the original *Chronicon* of Eusebius, now lost. He raises the age of the world to

36,525 years ; but he exhibits evident traces of the tradition of Paradise and the Fall. He reckons thirty dynasties of gods, followed by eight demi-gods, for a diminished period ; those followed by a still descending class, heroes ; and those by mortal kings, the first of whom was Menes. The extravagances of this Chronology seem to be formed upon some conception of the dwelling of their deified heroes in the stars, the general period or grand revolution of the heavens being computed at 36,525 years. It is supposed that Manetho had seen the Septuagint, which was completed in his time ; and that, with the pride of the learned body of a nation proverbially vain of its antiquity, and with the unscrupulousness of an idolator, he fabricated his Chronology, to throw the former slaves of Egypt into the shade.

Few subjects could offer a more natural and interesting inquiry than the site of Paradise, and few have been more learnedly contested. Tradition and local opinions place it in Mesopotamia : and the orientals still point with sorrow and veneration to the marshy spot where the “ mount of the garden ” is supposed to have once risen, and where the footsteps of the first parents of mankind once wandered among fruits and flowers, of a luxuriance and beauty that have long vanished from a degenerate world. But greater changes than those of the produce of the soil confuse the question ; the soil itself has been changed, and

the "four rivers" of Paradise are now beyond discovery<sup>1</sup>. Patriotism, too, has had her share. The Indians transfer the garden to Ceylon; the Northerns to Scandinavia. It has been imagined in the Fortunate Isles; in the great buried continent which forms the bed of the Atlantic; and even in Iceland!

Among contending probabilities, Armenia, near the sources of the Tigris and Euphrates, appears to have the strongest claims. The marshy interval between the rivers in Mesopotamia is deficient in all the features required by the original. The high grounds of Armenia, a country of singular natural beauty, and the table land of Western Asia, from which the Euphrates, the Araxes, and the Cyrus spring, at no great dis-

<sup>1</sup> Rosenmuller justly says: "Fluvius ille ex quo quatuor alii orti sunt, hodie frustra quæritur."—(*Schol. ad Gen.*) Michaelis as justly advises that we should not be peremptory, but should wait for additional materials. "Horum nihil cum satisfaciatur, desperemus Phisonem Paradisi, donec novæ quid lucis adfulgeat. Certi quid statuere non licet."—(*Suppl. ad Lex.*) Mr. Penn gets rid of the difficulty with less than his usual caution, by assuming the whole description of the rivers to be a gloss introduced from the margin. But no *conjecture* can be placed in competition with the authority of all the MSS. If new ones should be found contradicting the old, the question may assume a new form, but not till then. The subject is largely discussed by Shuckford, *Creation*, &c.; Wells, *Geog.*; Patrick, *Com.*; with laborious learning by Bochart, in *Geog. Sac.*; briefly by Hales, and ingeniously by Faber, *Horæ. Mos.*

tance from the Euxine ; the Tigris and the Euphrates, springing from opposite sides of the Tauric chain <sup>1</sup> ; sufficiently corresponds to the brief description of the original. “ The Lord God planted a garden eastward in Eden, and there he put the man whom he had formed. And a river went out of Eden to water the garden, and from thence it was parted, and became into four heads <sup>2</sup>. ” The obvious intent of this passage is, that a river whose fount was in the land or province of Eden, flowed into the garden ; after watering which it separated, at its exit, into *four* streams, each forming the head of a river. We know that the present sources of the Tigris and Euphrates are in the Armenian mountains ; why should we then look to the flat country far down their streams for the seat of Paradise, which is declared to have been near their springs ? Or what site can we conceive fitter for the “ garden of God,” than one of the valleys of those noble hills, even now rich and lovely, with a river pouring from the surrounding chain into its bosom, taking every shape of the fine diversities of the mountain landscape, alternately the lake, the cataract, and the stream ; rolling through marble glens, and forest dells, and sunny lawns, and the luxuriant embowerings of a land where flourished every tree, “ good for fruit or plea-

<sup>1</sup> *Rennell, Geog. of Herodot. quoted by Hales, vol. i.*

<sup>2</sup> *Gen. ii. 8—10.*

sant to the eye." Armenia is still a country of remarkable beauty and fertility<sup>1</sup>; though, from the loftiness of its mountains, suffering occasionally by severity of climate. But, on the supposition that instead of forming the table land of a continent, it was once an island, surrounded by an *extensive* ocean; the temperature would necessarily be much higher, and winter probably altogether unknown.

The courses of the four rivers may have changed largely since the time of Paradise, or even of the historian; for such changes are not unusual in rivers flowing through plains. But we have certain knowledge that in Armenia or its vicinity, the first settlement was made after the Deluge; and it would be not inconsistent with that minute care by which Providence sometimes reinforces human impressions, to bring back the patriarch to the spot which he had inhabited be-

<sup>1</sup> Faber, (*Orig. of Pagan Idolatry*, b. ii.) who adds in a note: "The whole country of Armenia is so beautiful, that travellers have imagined that they found here the situation of the original garden of Eden. The hills are covered with forests of oak, ash, beech, chestnut, walnut, and elms, encircled with vines growing perfectly wild, but producing vast quantities of grapes. Cotton grows spontaneously, as well as the finest European fruit-trees. Rice, wheat, millet, hemp, and flax, are raised in the plains almost without culture. The valleys afford the finest pasturage, &c."—(Memoir of a map of the countries between the Euxine and the Caspian.)

fore ; and show him, that though Paradise had perished, the hand of Heaven was still paramount, and the birth-place of his people was preserved, in the war of elements which had extinguished a world.

The sending out the raven gives the impression, that the Patriarch expected to find some traces of previous existence, perhaps some fragments of the dead ; to which the raven would naturally be attracted. The olive branch brought back by the dove, is almost a direct evidence that the soil had been fertile before. Even the present formation of the land to the north and west of Mesopotamia, aids the conjecture. If the ocean should now be rolled upon Northern Asia, the mountain ranges from Libanus to the Caspian would probably be islands ; the loftier range of Caucasus a chain of promontories projecting far above the sea, and, instead of their present desolation, exhibiting the luxuriance of the Sandwich Islands, from the milder temperature sustained by the surrounding waters. The site of Armenia would be dotted with islands ; Courdistan and Louristan would be an Archipelago ; the range extending from the Caspian to Thibet, with the mighty Hindu Koosh, would be a succession of islets, leading to an oceanic continent. We can even trace something of this order in the island chains of the existing ocean. If the great south sea were dried up, we should probably find the Andaman and Nicobar

islands the summits of a range of hills ; Sumatra, with its central range, a vast extent of elevated country, with central hills, like the plain of Quito with its Andes ; Borneo and New Holland huge table-lands, corresponding to each other as the Mysore to central Tartary. Of course, conceptions of the site of Paradise, a subject on which all documents have been withheld from our curiosity, must be conjectural. Yet the position of the chosen seat of happiness in a large and fertile island, seems congenial to human ideas. Security, seclusion, and luxuriance, are natural portions of the picture. All the ancient dreams, oriental and western, of happiness too high to be shared among the multitude of mankind ; have fixed their place in islands, (the *Insulæ Fortunatæ*, the White Island, the Island of Eternal Youth in the Pacific, &c.) surrounded by a guardian ocean, and watched over by protecting deities.



## CHAPTER XX.

### THE NEW WORLD.

THE violence of the deluge had ceased with its necessity. Mankind were in the universal grave. From that time, the waters began to subside. In the seventh month the ark touched the summit of Ararat. In the tenth month the mountain tops were seen. And on the seven and twentieth day of the second month of the new year, Noah, by the direct command of God, went forth with his family from the ark, and found himself the master of a new world.

Yet the circumstances were still more extraordinary than the situation. The patriarchal family, but a year before, were the last defenders of Revelation. Personally, they must have long lost all authority over their people ; and, in the fierce and profligate concourses of the mingled Cainites and Sethites, must have been little more than hermits, or outcasts from mankind. But, now, all was changed. The scoffers were in the bosom

of the deep<sup>1</sup>. The scorned, perhaps the persecuted, patriarch, was monarch of the globe ! a kingdom of solitude, for the moment ; but spreading before his eye with the prophetic promise of millions, of whom his three sons were to be the progenitors, and the kings. And among whom the true worship was to resume its rank, and Revelation be the law of mankind.

In answer to the sacrifice, by which he at once acknowledged the covenant of mercy, and purified the sins of his household, a blessing was given ; the infliction of sterility was to be no more. The “curse” was taken away. The original blessing of human increase was renewed ; but, with a fuller provision for human subsistence, in the permission to use animal food ; and even a more direct protection to that increase, in the shape of a positive command against bloodshed. The whole declaration was closed by a Covenant, taking the

<sup>1</sup> Fossils of human remains have been found in considerable numbers at Durfort in France. But the general absence of those remains, which has so much embarrassed one branch of the geologists, and given so rash a triumph to the infidelity of the other, is to be accounted for on the simple principle, that they have been sought, where it was never intended that they should be found. The grave of the ante-diluvian millions is the *bed of the ocean*. Perhaps, Scripture contemplates this mighty burial-place, where it declares that “the sea shall give up her dead,” that judgment shall embrace the primeval population, as well as the descendants of Noah ; the past with the existing world.

new race under the peculiar safeguard of Heaven, securing them against a future deluge, and promising them the uninterrupted succession of the seasons, seed time and harvest, while the earth remained.

This primal compact was sealed by a phenomenon, of a loveliness and magnificence, which, even now, can never be displayed without exciting the admiration and wonder of man. "And God said, this is the token of the covenant that I make between me and you, and every living creature that is with you. I do set my bow in the cloud." The bow is declared to be a sign to man, that the earth shall not be again destroyed by a deluge. Yet the emblem may have contained more than the promise of protection. The rainbow does not appear until the storm is past. It seldom appears at all in that portion of the year when the natural inclemency of the skies might have made such a pledge the most important, at least, to the early inhabitants of the world. Thus the security would seem to be given, when security was no longer required : or to be refused altogether, when the fears of mankind were most awakened. But its purpose may have been directed as much to the ruin past, as to the preservation to come. The Sabbath had been already established, for a perpetual memorial of the creation of the world ; the rainbow might be sent as a perpetual memorial of

its punishment and purification. Shining on the skirts of the retiring tempest, no nobler remembrancer could be given at once of the justice which had exercised so lofty a sway over the earth, and of the persevering and discriminating mercy which had saved the righteous remnant of mankind. All human monuments may perish; but, so long as man endures, *there* stands a monument of surpassing splendour, raised for his wisdom, in the skies; an unchangeable testimony to the constant action of Providence on the frame of nature, and of the justice dealt out to the crimes and virtues of man:—the “SIGN of God” in heaven<sup>1</sup>.

<sup>1</sup> It might be interesting, but it would be endless, to recapitulate the images which the rainbow has given to poetry and eloquence. Homer, who, as an Ionian, might have known its history, calls it the *sign*:—

Τερας μεροπων ανθρωπων.

It has been objected to this origin of the rainbow, that it must, from the nature of things, have already existed. The usual reply of our divines (Waterland, &c.) is, that it was then first appointed *as a sign*. But this is unsatisfactory. It may be justly demanded, why a familiar phenomenon should have been chosen for the purpose of conveying a most important promise, which it had never been capable of conveying before. Or, how are we to conceive that HE, whose resources are beyond all exhaustion, would have adopted means which, by their familiarity, were altogether destitute of the evidence of a Divine interposition? While, if the bow was seen in the cloud for the

*first time*, on the day when the patriarchal family descended to their new empire, what could be a more impressive attestation of the Divine will, than a magnificent meteor, seeming to connect the earth with the heavens; and, in its singular serenity and radiance, an almost direct emblem of peace and power. It is true that the rainbow is formed by the simple law of refraction. But, though it is the child of the shower, who can tell us that the dwellers in the land of Eden had ever seen rain, until the day of the deluge? Who sees the rainbow in three-fourths of Arabia? In Upper Egypt, and the vast districts spreading to the south, rain is said to be unknown. And yet its absence is consistent with great fertility.

“The Prince of Fezzan (a kingdom bounded on the north by Tripoli,) says that, in his country, it *never rains*; but that innumerable soft springs serve to moisten the earth, and keep the country in the state of a beautiful, well-watered garden. The fruits produced there are remarkably fine, and the Fezzan dates surpass in richness all others in Africa.”—*Tully's Letters from Tripoli*.

Fezzan lies within the natural range of the clouds and winds of the Mediterranean; but its protection is, that it is surrounded by a mountain belt on all sides, but the west, where it looks to the Great Desert. If Eden were thus surrounded, it might be equally a stranger to the shower. The whole point in question is merely, whether the small and secluded tribe of the Sethites *must* have already seen or heard of the phenomenon? That the Cainite tribes, the rovers over the great continents, might have witnessed this meteor, in common with every other of their various climates, is not in dispute. If the Sethites, from their locality, in a province circled by hills, had, like the Fezzaners, never seen the rainbow before; its first appearance, connected with a Divine declaration, might have fully answered the purpose of a memorial. A fall of snow in Nubia, connected with a Divine declaration, would, at this moment, answer the purpose of a memorial; inferior, however, to the one originally chosen, in beauty, in evident alliance with the restored tran-

quillity of the elements, and in frequency of return. It is remarkable that, as if with a view to cavils of this order, we are expressly told to attribute the irrigation of the Garden of Eden to its rivers, and to the “*den*,” that went up and watered the ground.”

## CHAPTER XXI.

### THE DIVISION OF THE EARTH.

THE descendants of Noah were now in possession of one of the most commanding and most productive regions of the world, a natural seat of empire. The Tauric Chain, stretching from Cilicia through nearly the whole extent of the greater Asia, throws out, from Armenia, two mountain ridges to the South, inclosing the vast plains of Assyria, Mesopotamia, and Susiana, watered by the Euphrates and Tigris. The first settlement is supposed to have been made in the plain of Erivan at the foot of the mountain, a district still remarkable for its fertility, and peculiarly for the vine<sup>1</sup>.

<sup>1</sup> Ararat, the highest peak in Armenia, is called by the natives the *Macis*, or "Mother of the World;" and by the Turks, *Agridah*, or the "Great Mountain." From its steepness and its perpetual snow, the summit is completely inaccessible. To the Armenians it is a holy hill; and on their journeys, they acknowledge its first sight, which sometimes occurs at the distance of ten days' journey, by prayer, and kissing the ground! The mountain,

A memorable event soon followed, which showed that man was still the same mixture of weakness as his ancestors. Noah planted a vineyard ; “ and he drank of the wine and was drunken.” His son Ham contemptuously called his brothers to look upon the humiliation of their father ; but Shem and Japhet, with filial virtue, refusing to join in this mockery, would not lift up their eyes, but “ took a garment, and went backward, and covered him as he lay<sup>1</sup>.” The candour of the Scriptures, which know no respect of persons, has here been perverted into a charge against the Patriarch and against Providence. But ensnared, as Noah undoubtedly was, by appetite ; it must be considered, that he might have been totally unacquainted with the nature of his hazard. The grape, of all the fruits of earth the one most directly given for *enjoyment*, had probably never ripened under the curse of the old

nearly a cone, and covered with snow half way down from its pinnacle, presents a magnificent object in the pure air and transparent sky of that fine country. The natives believe, not only that the ark rested upon its summit, but that it still exists there. It is now the subject of much popular fable. The Armenian patriarch, living at Erivan, told Tournefort that the ark had been actually seen, yet seen but once in the memory of man, by a monk of peculiar sanctity ; who, after fifty years of fasting and supplication that he might be honoured with the sight, was borne up miraculously, but was so pierced with the cold, that immediately on his return he died.

<sup>1</sup> Gen. ix. 20.



world; the simplicity of its manufacture into wine would require no previous knowledge of its properties; and the draught might have been swallowed, after a day of toil under the burning sky of Asia, without a sense of danger in an indulgence hitherto unknown to man. The error of Noah was the error of ignorance; and consequently, we cannot discover any direct mark of the Divine displeasure visited on the Patriarchal head. The disrespect of Ham was wilful, was charged as a crime, and was the source of a prophetic declaration, that his descendant, Canaan, should be “a servant of servants to his brethren.”

It has been tauntingly asked, why the punishment was turned from the criminal to his posterity? But Ham, having been already blessed as one of the sovereigns of the earth, it might be inconsistent with the ways of Providence to visit him with personal exclusion;—the punishment which degraded his line might be more severely felt by himself, and be more important as a lesson to mankind, than any personal suffering:—finally, the curse was not to take place, until it had been earned by the actual crimes of the Canaanites, when the iniquity of the land was full, 430 years after Abraham.

In the same spirit it has been asked, Was the Patriarch entitled to call down vengeance on his

son for the detection of his own error? But the answer is, that the denunciation was beyond his controul—that the entire was a *prophecy*, by which Providence declared the characteristic fortunes of the three great families of the human race: the religious supremacy of the descendants of Shem; the warlike and opulent supremacy of those of Japhet; and the general inferiority of those of Ham in both religion and arms;—and that, instead of a vindictive triumph in the delivery of this high and far-reaching prediction, there might have been a pang, the single touch of the Divine hand for his excess, in the forced knowledge, that sin and sorrow should yet return to a world, which had paid so solemn a penalty for its purification.

The transaction, in all its parts,—the planting of the vineyard, the rash indulgence, the exposure by the irreverent son, the veiling by Shem and Japhet, and the prediction, has had its strictly corresponding events in one of the most memorable periods of the Christian world.

The subsequent years of the great Patriarch saw the complete fulfilment of that prophecy by which his name was given. In his days “comfort” was come: after all the outrages of the early world, and the desolations of the flood, the earth had found her Rest. It was the Sabbath of the Lord, the day of the supremacy of religion, of

universal peace, and of the universal empire of the Patriarchal family, the kingdom of the sons of God, a Sabbath of 500 years.

This period must not be confounded with any portion of the world's existence, before or after. The visible sign of the covenant in Heaven, the abolition of the curse, and the transmission of the universal sceptre into the hands of the Patriarchal line, were features to which no similitude is found in any other era from the creation to Christianity. The dominion, in the beginning, must, of course, have been over a desert; but the natural rapidity of increase, in the finest regions of Asia, undisturbed by war, and unchecked by boundary, must have more than rivalled all that later ages have known of the burst of human existence. Spreading, under advantages such as have never been enjoyed since, to the same extent, by man; with no severity of climate to encounter, no unhealthiness of soil, no hostile savage, no barren and inhospitable wilderness; the tide of population must have poured over the teeming plains of Asia with force incalculable.

At the close of this period, another great change was at hand. The multitudes, gathered under the Patriarchal chieftains in the space of 541 years, were to be sent forth to take possession of the globe<sup>1</sup>. Two vast colonies now moved to

<sup>1</sup> The usual computation is, that even in 300 years they must have amounted to as many millions. But this calculation pro-

the North and South. The descendants of Shem, the chosen Patriarch, remained nearly in the land of their ancestors, enlarging it by the adjoining territories once possessed by Japhet and Ham. Their empire comprehended the fairest portion of the earth,—Syria, Assyria, Palestine, Persia, and the north of Arabia. To the descendants of Ham were given the unlimited regions of the South, with a portion of the East. the descendants of Japhet were made lords of the future lands of War, Commerce, and the Arts, Greece, Italy, Spain, Gaul, and the north of Europe and Asia; a dominion teeming with all the materials of power, but extending into the wildest regions and severest climates of the earth. The division was made to each of the three great tribes, “to every one, after his tongue, after their families, after their nations<sup>1</sup>.” Expressions which,

ceeds on the unauthorized ground, that the births occurred as early in the Patriarchal ages as now. Petavius calculates them from the age of seventeen; they were more likely to have begun from the age of a hundred; gradually, however, becoming earlier with the diminution of longevity.

<sup>1</sup> This single expression, “After his tongue,” shows that the division was allotted according to the *future* condition of those colonies, when they should enlarge into empires. For, at the period of the division we are expressly told, that all the descendants of Noah were of “one speech.” The diversity of language was a fact of subsequent occurrence; in Shinaar itself half a century distant, and in the remoter and more isolated settlements, probably some ages. The allotment with respect

clearly imply a deliberate, prospective arrangement of territory by Providence, according to their future habits, numbers, and characters<sup>1</sup>.

to "nations" was of the same character—it referred to time. In Genesis, (x. 20. 31.) the expression "after their tongues," is directly referred to the period when the remote descendants of Shem, Ham, and Japhet, were actually in possession.

<sup>1</sup> The whole tenor of Scripture confirms the idea, that this extraordinary movement was the result of a direct impulse of the Divine will. The declaration of Moses to the Israelites, "Hath HE not made thee and established thee? Remember the days of old: consider the years of many generations. Ask thy father, and he will show thee; thy elders, and they will tell thee. When the Most High *divided to the nations their inheritance*, when He *separated* the sons of Adam, He set the bounds of the people *according to the number of the children of Israel.*" (Deut. xxxii. 7.) And St. Paul's declaration to the Gentiles, "He hath made of one blood all nations of men to dwell on the face of the earth, and hath *determined the times before appointed*, and the *bounds of their habitation*," (Acts xvii. 26.) express the same fact, of a determinate location of the original possessors, with a view to the future; for we can scarcely conceive this solemn and formal language to be adopted merely to state the vague and general truth, acknowledged by both Jew and Gentile, that the general conduct of the world was in the hands of Providence. The prophetic name of Peleg (Division), given 140 years before, as much argues a Divine determination to spread the tribes over the earth, as the prophetic name of Noah, a Divine determination to restore the earth from the havoc of the Deluge. "The main point in the origin of nations is, The certainty of the propagation of mankind from the posterity of Noah; of which there is strong and convincing evidence in the names of the nations themselves, which have preserved the original name of their founder in their own: as the Medes from

The progress of this great movement was gradual, and is supposed to have occupied four hundred years. Large intermediate districts must have been left either desert or thinly inhabited; for even in Palestine, so late as the time of Abraham, much of the land was evidently unappropriated. But this pacific possession of the territory was speedily violated in the East. A tribe of Cushites, headed by Nin<sup>1</sup>, or Nimrod, which had originally been settled to the East of Babylonia, suddenly returned, and seized Shinaar, the patrimony of the Arphaxadites. The agricultural wealth of the sons of Shem, or the peculiar fertility of their land, may have excited the invasion; which thus established a new reign of rapine among mankind. Of the great devastators before the deluge, the historian had said, "They

Medai, the Thracians from Thiras, the Ionians from Javan, the Sidonians from Sidon; the Elymæans, Assyrians, Lydians, from Elam, Assur, and Lud, &c." (*Stillingfleet, Origines Sacræ*. 117.) He also derives the *Pelasgi*, or general name of the settlers of Greece, from *Peleg*.

<sup>1</sup> The word Nin, interpreted the "Son," as the direct descendant, (in the 4th generation,) or most powerful of the sons of Cush, the commentators suppose to have been changed into Nimrod, (the rebel,) according to a Jewish custom of fixing names of hatred or ridicule on the objects of their hostility. Thus *Nachash*, the brazen serpent, (broken by Hezekiah, that it might not lead the people into idolatry) was called *Nachashtan*, (a piece of brass). Thus the name of Beelzebub was changed into Beelzebul (a god of dung).

became mighty men, which were of old, men of renown." The rapine of the invader of Shinaar was, like theirs, colossal. "He began to be a mighty one in the earth; a mighty hunter before the Lord;" a model of the future leaders of revolution, a post-diluvian giant in evil.

From the plain of Shinaar, whose central situation incomparably adapted it for the seat of universal dominion, the Conqueror proceeded to extend and consolidate his conquests. He invaded the remaining patrimony of the race of Shem. Having commenced the building of eight great cities, among which were the capitals, or fortresses, of Nineveh and Babel, he was prepared for a career of unlimited subjugation. In ages, which saw the chief settled territories in possession of tribes widely separated, probably of small numbers, struggling with the first difficulties of solitary life in the forests and morasses of the uncultured world, and totally destitute of that combination, which forms the strength of empire; a bold barbarian might have overrun half the earth, without effective resistance; and by extending one fierce and iron authority over man, might have

<sup>1</sup> The Hebrew idiom frequently makes a superlative by adding the name of the Deity. "A great city to God," (Jonah iii. 3.) is a city of extraordinary magnitude. Such is the general idea of the Commentators. (Patrick, &c.) In the instance of the usurper, Nimrod, at least, it could not have been connected with approval.

finally arrested the progress of all improvement, broken the spirit of the human race, and, with a still more fatal success, compelled the adoption of every impurity of his profligate will, or his infidel religion. That this danger was not chimerical, is evident; from the extraordinary influence of Nimrod, brief as was his empire. Under the allegorical titles of Baal, Bel, Belus, and Bela Ramah, he became the emblem of Deity to the Phœnicians, Assyrians, Greeks, and Hindoos, and through them to, perhaps, all the powerful nations of Paganism. With the Orientals, the sun was declared his image, or his throne. With the imaginative Greeks, he took his perpetual place among the stars, and they saw in the magnificent constellation of “the mighty hunter,” Orion, the splendour and supremacy of the Great Babylonian King. The policy of building Babylon is declared by the Scriptures to have been grounded on the fear of dispersion, and the desire of making a name; in other words, of forming and fixing an empire. The means are perfectly adapted to the object, and to the circumstances.

The habits of mankind, sent to seek their settlements over the face of the globe, must have been, for ages, those of Nomades, shepherd tribes roving without limit over the mighty waste, assembling, and separating again as rapidly, according to the caprice or necessities of the time. To *fix* his tribes, by local habitation, and the manners of



civilized life, the building of cities was the most natural expedient of the sagacious chieftain, whom they had followed to the conquest of Shinaar ; yet, whom they might desert at a moment, to wander through the desert once more, and leave his empire a shadow. Babylon was the consolidation of this force ; and nothing could be more menacing to mankind. With an impregnable centre of power, with habits of conquest, with a compact and fixed population, the sovereign of Babel must have been irresistible by the uncombined and undisciplined tribes scattered over Asia, or the globe. Human resistance being thus hopeless ; it may be not uninteresting to inquire, by what use of the ordinary instruments of Providence this ruinous torrent of power could have been turned back to its source. To have inspired a sudden spirit of combined hostility into the scattered nations, might have broken up their habits of industry, have required a miracle for their mere assemblage in sufficient force, and have largely extended human misery, if not ended only by exchanging one usurpation for another. Famine, or pestilence, might have extinguished the usurpation and its armies ; but the punishment might have been more severe than seemed fitting to the Divine mercy ; the visitation too might have been attributed to human casualty : and, in all events, the moral would probably be lost to all but the

lookers on ; with the dead the Divine lesson might have died.

But, a work was wrought, which, avoiding all hazards, yet applied the most simple, effective, and comprehensive of all remedies ;—their speech was confounded by miracle ! The use of a common language was lost ; and the result was the immediate and bloodless cessation of that building, to shake which the blood of all the tribes of earth might have been lavished in vain <sup>1</sup>.

The miracle was fully adequate to the result, the dispersion of the overwhelming multitude which made Babel hazardous to the earth. By dissolving the unity of tongue the unity of government was dissolved at the moment ; discipline, polity, military order, kingly authority, were incapable of being enforced in an universal mixture of unknown languages. The migratory habits of the people were thus free to return, and return with additional strength. For, the same diversity of tongues which prohibited their union as an empire,

<sup>1</sup> The miracle speaks only of the *builders of Babel*. But those builders probably included the great majority of the nation. In the early ages, when main force was the only instrument, all was done by multitude. Thus, it is said that the building of the great pyramid occupied the labour of 360,000 men for twenty years.—(*Diodor.*) Nearly the entire of the Israelites, two millions, seem to have shared in the public works. The building of the walls and dwellings of Babylon may have occupied the whole disposable population.

would prohibit their union as tribes. In their roving, they would naturally divide into as many distinct clans as there were languages ; and thus broken up and comminuted, each would wander its own way, until it was stopped by some natural barrier of mountain, forest, or ocean ; where it settled at last, spread its population, and propagated its language. “ So the Lord scattered them abroad from thence on the *face of all the earth.*” The instrument was Divine, but the process was true to nature.

Commentators, following the Oriental traditions, have attempted to invest the miracle with additional dignity, by wrapping the tower and city in fire from heaven. But the sacred narrative simply, and much more consistently, tells us, that “ the builders left off to build the city.” The interposition was adequate to the effect, and the effect adequate to the purpose. Babel was *not* destroyed ; it was still inhabited, powerful, and the head of an empire ; but its ambition was barred, and its dangerous strength smitten away, by the dispersion of that overwhelming multitude which it once held ready to pour on the surrounding world.

Yet it becomes a question, why the world was to suffer the evils inevitable to a confusion of tongues, for the crime of the usurping empire. The reason may be found, in its avoidance of the heavier evils inevitable to a state of slavery. The

Divine interposition had baffled the attempt of the Babylonian sovereign "to make himself a name." But the attempt was too congenial to human cupidity to have remained long untried by some other of the daring spirits of mankind. A new African or European Nimrod might have raised a new centre of empire, and the freedom of the world might have required a new miracle. War in all ages is the supreme scourge of society ; and if, in all the established strength of kingdoms in our day, it shakes them to their foundations ; with what ruinous and irrecoverable wreck might it not have crushed the little fluctuating tenancies of the infant world ? But there was another element of hazard in the constitution of the first ages, and one which rendered it of the highest providential importance to draw within the narrowest possible limits all the means of war. The life of man was still of almost ante-diluvian length ; the life of the Patriarch Reu, the contemporary of Nimrod, was 239 years. What devastation might not be within the hands of a conqueror wasting the world for two hundred years ? Mahomet was but ten years at the head of armies : in those ten he swept Arabia, Syria, and shook the Greek empire, from its topmost stone. Tamerlane, within five-and-thirty years, ravaged from the Volga to the Persian Gulf, and from the Ganges to the Mediterranean. What limit could have been placed to the empire of the fiery Arab, with two hundred years

of life before him ? Or of the great king of Samarcand, already master of Tartary, Persia, and India, and waiting only for the conquest of China, to turn his face westward, and roll the tide of war over Europe ? Or, what would have been the fate of Europe, and of all nations, if that extraordinary man of our own day, who, in a career of *ten years*<sup>1</sup>, drove his chariot wheels again and again over the armed neck of the Continent ; had two hundred years of life before him, with the original, enthusiastic millions of the Revolution, untired by age, and unthinned by time, to fight his battles ? The world might have been loaded with a weight of chains that must cripple and bow it down, until it had lost all power of restoration. The heart of man might have been worn away by the hopeless length of the struggle ; slavery might have become the natural attitude of mankind ; the earth might have been covered with an eruption of fire and blood, sufficient to burn out the living principle, and leave it encumbered with a solid weight of sterility and ruin, through which no future labour of mankind could pierce to the moral soil.

No difference of languages could prevent invasion ; but, of all the obstacles to permanent possession, that difference is the most intractable. It is a perpetual principle of alienation, the most stubborn remembrancer of old ties, and the most inve-

<sup>1</sup> The French Empire, A. D. 1804—1814.

terate repellent of new, to be found in all the impulses of man. The miracle completely effected its purposes, immediate and final. It suppressed all projects of universal empire. Of Nimrod, thenceforth, nothing more is known, than that he left his dominions to a dynasty, which soon lost Assyria, and sank for a thousand years; at the end of that period it was suffered to emerge under Ninus the Second, was enlarged by Semiramis, and raised to the first rank by Nebuchadnezzar. But it was no longer within the faculties of any Oriental throne to possess universal dominion; the universal language, which once might have made a highway for its armies over the earth, was at an end; a thousand years of separate tongues had dis severed the habits of mankind. For many ages the principle of clanship prevailed, and resisted the principle of empire. Conquest had no power to combine materials whose nature was repulsion; the East was covered with petty chieftainries; Joshua found twenty kings in the small province of Palestine; the sway of the "golden head" of Eastern empire was dangerous no more; and, after the first sweep of conquest, the limit of its speech was nearly the limit of its power<sup>1</sup>.

<sup>1</sup> Few things are more remarkable than the rapid decay of the great empires. Of the early Assyrian, nominally of 1200 years' duration, we know little, but that it lingered on, scarcely bearing the texture of an empire, wasted by profligate governors and provincial rebellions; the history of an empire of savages.

The Babylonian, raised to supremacy by Nebuchadnezzar, scarcely survived himself; the Persian continued but two centuries and a half; the Macedonian perished with its founder. The Roman was a memorable exception; but its first 300 years were limited to an Italian province, and its last 200 were years of decay. Yet there was also a sufficient and *peculiar* reason for the continuance and extent of its dominion: in the direct instrumentality of the Republic in bringing the earth under a general similitude of government; and of the Empire, in keeping it under a general control; and both, for the express service of Christianity.

## CHAPTER XXII.

### THE CONFUSION OF TONGUES.

THE miracle of Babel receives the fullest human confirmation from its existing results : it is the only satisfactory mode of accounting for the diversities of language. There are probably upwards of two hundred distinct dialects or languages in the earth. The principle of all is the same—the relation of the noun to the verb, of the thing to the action ; yet the discrepancies are so various, so wide, so intricate, and yet so systematic, as to imply an influence totally beyond the mere rude anomalies produced by time : this was the work of the “ Confusion.” The subsequent “ Dispersion” offers the only rational account of the universality of the change.

The great division of the earth had taken place but about half a century before. At that time “the whole earth was of one speech.” Those diversities are not to be explained by novelty of objects, changes of clime, or general incidents in the condition of remote tribes : for such causes could not alter the *construction*. There is nothing of which nations



are more tenacious than their original language<sup>1</sup>. We have living experience how slightly colonization on the broadest scale affects language. New words, perhaps new phrases, barbarize or amplify the original speech, but the construction remains unshaken. Yet, it was the construction, which was chiefly changed !

The three Quarters of the old world have each a peculiar system of language. They all employ words sufficiently like, to show that they had once a common origin ; they all use a fabric so strikingly distinct, as to show that a complete general change has operated on the original materials, and recombined them in another form<sup>2</sup>.

The construction of the three great families of language, the oriental, the western, and the northern, is actually so distinct ; that a new wonder arises from the perfect adequacy of each

<sup>1</sup> The Latin of Plautus was perfectly intelligible by the populace in Italy to the time of Theodoric, a period of 700 years. Homer's Greek was vernacular for nearly 3000 years. Hebrew and Arabic seem never to have changed, from the beginning. Some curious remarks on this subject will be found in *Wotton*.

<sup>2</sup> The common conjecture, that the "confusion" meant no more than a confusion of the lip, a lisp, or deficiency of articulation, is inconsistent with the whole narrative. A lisp would be altogether inadequate to produce the effect of compelling a willing populace or an ambitious leader to forego anything. It is true that שפה means *lip*, but lip means speech. It was already declared that "the earth was of one *lip*," which can mean nothing but a general language.

to perform all the purposes of human communication. The Hebrew, and its kindred languages, in general, form the various cases by syllables permanently *fixed* to the beginning of the word ; the Greek, and its kindred, by syllables permanently *fixed* to the end. The northern by syllables *unfixed*. The oriental verb abounds in Voices ; the Hebrew has seven ; the Arabic thirteen ; the Chaldee and Syriac have six, &c. ; the western has two, or at most three. The northern has none ; it expresses the active and passive by auxiliaries. And those distinctions reach back to the earliest times ; the Homeric language of three thousand years ago possesses all those characteristics in even greater prominence than the Greek of our day<sup>1</sup>.

The northern languages have never exhibited either the prefix or the affix. In fact, the more remote the period of each, the more marked is the difference. The first operation of the miracle seems to have been—a total discrepancy in the three ; which it has been the work of time to soften away by communication, in the various shapes of government, commerce, and literature. But, while each has a separate spirit, and we can almost trace in the simplicity, force, and grandeur, of the Hebrew and its tribe, something of a simi-

<sup>1</sup> The modern Greek has adopted the “shall” and “will” of the northern languages—an innovation which singularly subverts the elegance of its mechanism, but which was probably the result of long slavery : the Teutonic tribes.

litude to the purity, breadth, and arid splendour, of its landscape and its skies ; in the exuberant copiousness and picturesque power of the Greek, the language of a land of romantic loveliness, and ever-changing variety ; and in the wild, bold, and expressive dialects of the north, words fitted for thoughts engendered by the depths of forests, sullen and desolate plains, and the cloudy magnificence of a heaven of storms ; all are equally and admirably capable of supplying every passion and purpose of the human heart with the means of developing itself to mankind.

But an extraordinary revolution in language is already preparing. The prophetic announcement that a day is to arrive, when one great Divine authority shall preside over all nations, has long constituted a prominent hope of Christianity. The times, when the kingdoms of the earth shall become “ the kingdom of the Lord ;” when “ the stone cut out of the mountain without hands,” shall enlarge into the dimensions of the globe ; are connected with such extensive promises of human happiness, and such superb displays of providential wisdom, that the most subdued imagination may feel a resistless interest in watching every gleam of their coming, whether from earth or heaven. It might be naturally conceived, that, as the lawless absorption of all kingdoms into one was prohibited by the division of languages, their rightful union would be preceded

by at least the partial removal of the obstacle. And it is remarkable, that a process strongly tending to restore an universal language has been in action for the last century ; in accelerated action from the beginning of the present ; and, within the last ten years, in still more rapid and vigorous action, year by year. The British settlements in America had rendered the English language, a hundred years ago, co-extensive with the most prosperous and active colony in the world. But this was a conquest over a desert, or over the jargon of savages. In 1805, an unconscious effort commenced, to shake the local exclusiveness of every other language, savage and civilized. The extraordinary propagation of the Scriptures, though in the native tongues, yet, connected as it was with English translation, English missions, influence, intercourse and literature, gave a signal impulse to the progress of the language ; together with an increased and merited sense of honour for the national character in every quarter of the globe. Within a still later period, a sudden efflux of the British population has spread at once to the west, the south, and the new world rising in the waters of the Pacific. Canada, to the Arctic Circle, and the Russian frontier ; the vast regions of Southern Africa ; and New Holland, commanding the cloud of islands of the surrounding ocean ; are the recent conquests of the English language. But, whether above or below the Russ, Chinese, and

Spanish, in extent of space ; it has the striking superiority, that while they are at a stand, or urged on only by authority, it is advancing by its nature ; that, instead of being in the hands of stagnant, or enslaved, of barbarous, or disunited nations, it is in the hands of the most enterprising colonists of the earth ; the most intelligent, dextrous, and indefatigable in their pursuits ; continually receiving fresh accessions of numbers ; already holding the central stations from which they overlook the most opulent and jealous regions of the east ; and certain, in a few years, to penetrate and loosen every barrier, till all sink down together, before the progress of their commerce, their civilization, and their *language*.

The brevity of the Mosaic record, down to the call of Abraham, has often excited surprise. Doubtless, events of great variety and interest must have occurred in the collisions, corruptions, and restorations, of the ante-diluvian world. But the reason of this brevity may have been the preservation of the *outline* ; which alone was important for the identification of the plan of Providence throughout the ages to come. If the history had given all the details, that outline might have been too difficult to trace. But now, by restricting the narrative to those leading events which distinctly formed the framework of the Providen-

tial plan in the first ages, we see its course clear. We have the map, with the great features traced upon it, to the exclusion of all the minor prominences. We have the form, undisguised by the various changes and involutions of the robe. Yet this but the more distinctly vindicates the *inspiration* of the Pentateuch. What *human* dexterity could thus anticipate the fates, and thus administer to, the wisdom, of the future ?

# THE SECOND CYCLE.

## BOOK II.

### CHAPTER XXIII.

#### THE CALL OF ABRAHAM.

THE commencement of the Second Era of Revelation was distinguished by one of those acts of Providence which illustrate the great principle, that "HE will have mercy on whom HE will have mercy." The chosen line, the sons of Shem, had fallen into the common idolatry of Chaldæa<sup>1</sup>. And as God chose Paul out of the multitude of the Jewish persecutors, He chose Abraham out of the multitude of the Babylonish Apostates<sup>2</sup>. His first summons was a general command to leave the place of his birth, "Ur of the Chaldees." He migrated to Charran, in the west of Mesopotamia<sup>3</sup>.

<sup>1</sup> Joshua xxiv. 2.

<sup>2</sup> Acts vii. 3.

<sup>3</sup> Charran is supposed to have been the Carrhæ, near which Crassus was defeated. It was about 120 miles west of Ur.

In fourteen years after, on the death of Terah, his father, he received a second command to go forth; and, in the spirit of sacred submission, obeyed, "not knowing whither he went." On his advance into Palestine; at Sichem, the more distinct declaration was given, that the land was to be the possession of his family, that his family should enlarge into a great nation, and that from him should be descended the Messiah<sup>1</sup>. Why Abraham should have been sent into Palestine so many ages before its actual possession, is perhaps to be accounted for only on the principle that Providence never wastes power. Abraham could not have continued the depositary of religion, yet continued safe in his native place, without a miracle. He was thus removed from the land of the idolator, into a remote country; where, however the purity of the first revelation might have been gradually tarnished, its chief features survived. Abimelech, king of Gerar, though a man of violence<sup>2</sup>, evidently acknow-

<sup>1</sup> Jewish tradition, reluctant to admit the possible error of the national ancestor, held that Abraham had first openly declared his hostility to idols; and, thus rendering himself the object of persecution, was at once led from Chaldæa by the Divine voice, and driven by the popular resentment.—*Judith* v. 6.

<sup>2</sup> There has been some idle scoffing at the modern improbability of the seizure of Sarah, at the ages of 66 and 90, by the Kings of Egypt and Gerar. But the only improbability arises from overlooking the difference in the duration of human life. In Abraham's time, it was nearly twice the average of life in



ledged the true Deity, by his prayer, "Lord, wilt thou slay a righteous nation?" Melchizedec, the king of Salem, was an actual priest of God; and admitted Abraham as a known fellow worshipper: "Blessed be Abraham, servant of the Most High God, the possessor of heaven and earth." Even among the wild habits of the Arabs, there was a redeeming tincture of revelation; and the language of Job is full of a more profound religious impression, than that of any uninspired Jew. Another peculiarity of the land was, that it was divided into extremely small sovereignties: thus Abraham's household, which must

ours. He died at 175. On this scale Sarah, when in Egypt, would have arrived at scarcely more than a third of the common duration, equivalent to about 30 years now. Even at ninety, she would have reached little more than half the length of human life; or, on our scale, about 45 or 50. But there is an evident distinction in the narratives. In the former instance, Abraham speaks of Sarah's beauty as rendering her situation perilous; and this beauty is praised by "the princes of Egypt." In the latter, nothing is said of her beauty, which had probably been impaired by the natural result of years; though a rapacious and profligate prince might include her in the number of his slaves.

It has been unnecessarily presumed, that the transaction with Abimelech is merely a confused repetition of the story of the seizure by Pharaoh. But the two narratives are given, with separate circumstances, on the part of the kings; with separate penalties for their transgression; and, as has just been observed, with a striking omission in the latter narrative, suitable to the interval of time.

have been crushed by a collision with the Chaldæans, became a formidable force among the little principalities of Palestine<sup>1</sup>. Both causes must have greatly lightened the difficulty of preserving his family and his religion,

His gradual separation from his brother's house, and even from Lot, may have been for the purpose of preserving his immediate descendants free from the taint of those original Chaldæan habits, which must have long had their influence. It is evident that idols were worshipped among the relatives of Abraham in Mesopotamia so late as the time of Jacob's marriage, nearly two hundred years after.

After the blessing of Melchizedec, a new declaration of the Divine blessing was made to Abraham. The promise, that his children should inherit the land, was repeated still more distinctly; and, on his asking some testimony of the grant, he was commanded to prepare the ceremonial of a covenant, as was usual between man and man. A heifer, a she-goat, and a ram, each three years old, were cut asunder, and the parts laid opposite to each other; a turtle-dove and a young pigeon were also presented, but not di-

<sup>1</sup> The sons of Heth, in this sense, pronounce Abraham "a mighty prince;" and his recovery of the spoil taken from the kings of the cities of the plain, shows how effectively his power must have been felt among those minute principalities.

vided<sup>1</sup>. When twilight fell, Abraham was thrown into a state of trance,—a Divine vision; and the Lord declared to him the sufferings of his posterity in Egypt, and their triumph. When the darkness fell deeper still, the fiery column, the emblem of the Divine presence, passed between the pieces of the slain animals; and thus gave the direct ratification<sup>2</sup>.

It is observable, that the birth and relationship of this new Seth bore a striking similitude to those of the son of Adam. As Adam had three sons, one of whom passed away without receiving the true religion; another, receiving it, died without being the heir; and a third, the young-

<sup>1</sup> This custom is alluded to in Jeremiah (xxxiv. 18); where the princes of Judah are reproached with neglecting their covenants, made by dividing the sacrifice. The ceremony was frequent in the early ages; and implied that the breakers of the compact deserved to be cut in pieces, like the animals. Homer alludes to it in the “*ορκια πιστα ταμοντες.*”—*Le Clerc.*

The declaration, that the sufferings of Israel would last 400 years, is explicable, by dating from the birth of Isaac, which, to the Exodus, was 405 years. The subsequent declaration, that the time would be 430 (Exod. xiii. 40), is equally explicable, by including Abraham's sojourn in Canaan *before* the birth of Isaac, 25 years.

<sup>2</sup> Abraham is represented as in great awe and terror during this trance; probably with prophetic reference to the afflictions of his posterity in Egypt; and the aspect of the Shekinah, as a fiery furnace, might be also a direct symbol of the “iron furnaces” of Egyptian bondage.—*Deuter. iv. 20.*

est, became the *appointed* head of the line.—So, of the sons of Terah : the eldest, Haran, lived in the land of idolatry until his death ; the second, Nahor, though, with Abraham, abandoning the land of idolatry, and of course, its religion, died without possessing the headship ; and the third was the *appointed*, the “ called ” of Heaven, to be the leader of the chosen line. And as Adam had been included in the mercies of the promise ; so Terah, old as he was, was not left to finish his course in darkness, but, with Abraham, received and followed the Divine will.

The promise of offspring, fourteen years delayed, was at length renewed directly to Sarah. But she was now ninety years old, and she treated it with laughter. Abraham received it with grateful exultation.

This act of beneficence was followed by an act of justice. The inhabitants of the vale now covered by the Dead Sea had rendered themselves an abomination, and must be extinguished. Lot and his family were divinely rescued, and the cities were destroyed by the miraculous descent of fire from heaven. The Dead Sea still remains a memorial of the destruction ; a melancholy and deathlike expanse of waters, still throwing up bitumen, and stifling vapours, and like none other under the face of heaven.

In the useless and hazardous efforts to reconcile the wilful scepticism of French and German infidels to Revelation, by diluting its miracles down to common events ; this judgment is attributed to lightning suddenly striking upon a soil impregnated with bitumen. With this concession from the Christian, who still admits that the lightning was the minister of Heaven ; the infidel fills up the complement, by presuming that, as all admit the accidental nature of a thunder-storm, the whole was accidental. But the history says nothing of *lightning* : its plain statement is, “ the Lord *rained* upon Sodom and upon Gomorrah *brimstone and fire* from the Lord out of heaven<sup>1</sup>. ” Brimstone and fire are not lightning, and “ raining ” is, of all descriptions, the least analogous to the sudden and intermitted blaze of electric fire. It describes a steady, heavy descent of burning matter upon the guilty cities. Nothing is said even of the contribution of the bituminous soil to this flame ; all is the work of the descending rain of fire. But the whole transaction is marked by the most unequivocal proofs of *Divine design*. In the first instance, it is declared that if Sodom contained but ten righteous, it should *not* be destroyed at all ; in the next, that the angels are “ *sent* ” to destroy it ; in the next, that Zoar, one of the destined cities, is expressly exempted ; in the next, that until Lot

<sup>1</sup> Gen. xix. 24.

reaches Zoar the judgment is *expressly delayed*. Our Saviour also alludes to the catastrophe of the cities, expressly, as produced by a “*rain of fire and brimstone from the Lord*<sup>1</sup>.” The modern system of conciliation, however innocently intended, altogether humiliates the dignity of the *inspired* record; besides involving the logical paradox, of attempting to give additional credibility to a general narrative, by disputing the truth of all its particulars.

The faith of Abraham was subsequently to be tried by a mysterious transaction, which still divides the commentators. He was commanded to offer up his son Isaac. He obeyed the injunction, led him to the appointed spot, laid him on the altar, and had already raised the knife, when his arm was stayed by the voice of an angel, declaring that *sufficient proof* of “*his fearing God*” had been given by this unhesitating surrender of his heir. Why this peculiar species of trial should have been adopted, is the question. It is clear that the proof of his faith was one purpose; but the act tended so directly to sanction human sacrifice, that we must look to some further object for its necessity. Divines chiefly hold, that this object was to give *Abraham* a typical representation of the death

<sup>1</sup> Luke xvii. 31.

of Christ<sup>1</sup>. But against this theory stands the strong circumstance, that Isaac was *not put to*

<sup>1</sup> Warburton's opinion, as adopted by Graves, Faber, &c. and forming the present standard on the subject, is worth some examination. Warburton, trampling down, as usual, every thing in chase of his conjecture, peremptorily decides that Abraham, in the offering of Isaac, *must* have seen the mode of man's redemption. If the text tells us nothing of this, he is not the more at a loss for an answer; though, as usual, at the expense of inspiration. He tells us that the matter was suppressed by the historian, because it would be an anticipation of the disclosures reserved for the Gospel! How he was thus let into the complicity of Moses, he has not explained. But this decision is not to be reached but by the most palpable violence to the text. Thus he asserts—that the three days comprehend the *whole transaction*; while the text distinctly limits them to the *journey*; “On the *third day* Abraham lifted up his eyes, and saw the place *afar off*.”—That the return of Isaac, who *did not suffer*, was a direct reference to His rising from the dead who did—and that St. Paul's expression of Isaac's being received from the dead, *in a figure*, applies solely to this emblematic sacrifice and resurrection.

But the context shows, that St. Paul's expression refers *not to* the sacrifice, but to the *birth*, of Isaac. The Apostle is panegyri-  
zing the faith of Abraham; and, to show its completeness, says, that he relied on the Divine promise, even though he should have sacrificed his son; for he was convinced that God could have given life to his ashes on the altar.—That Isaac, being born of Sarah, who was past the natural possibility of child-bearing, and thus received from a source effete and *dead* by nature, the *σῶμα νεκρωμενον* of his mother, was figuratively (*εν παραβολη*) received from the dead.—And that Abraham rightly reasoned, that as God had originally thus given him from the dead, for the purpose of realizing the promise; he would equally give him from the dead, if such an exertion of the Divine power were rendered neces-

*death.* It also entirely disregards the feature from which the whole transaction receives its *inspired*

sary ; which of course it must be, if Isaac had been consumed on the altar ; in other words, that the promise, whose performance was begun by one miracle, would be carried through by another.

But the chief argument by which Warburton labours to sustain his error is, that Abraham is declared to have “ seen the day of the Messiah, and to have rejoiced in it.” This he refers to the time of the sacrifice. Suspicion always attaches to statements of Scriptural events, of which Scripture itself says nothing ; and to this common interpretation of the text, there is the additional objection, that it involves an absurdity. “ Abraham rejoiced to see my day, and he saw it, and was glad,” is nothing more than an identical proposition : “ He rejoiced to see my day, and he saw it, and rejoiced.” That this is unworthy of Scripture, Warburton admits, but, as he never gives up a hypothesis, he naturally fails to draw the conclusion. Every reader of the original knows, that among the meanings of *αγαλλιαω* is that of “ desiring, longing for,” &c.—*Gestio, desiderio alicujus rei feror.* (*Schleusner.*) Our Lord’s obvious language is, “ Abraham greatly desired to see my day ; and he saw it, and rejoiced.” It was at once a reproof, an argument, and a declaration of his own knowledge of heavenly things.—“ The forefather, of whom you are so proud, eagerly desired to see the coming on earth of him whom you despise. Abraham was at length vouchsafed that sight ; and it was a source of exultation to him, however it may be scorned by his blind and prejudiced posterity.” Even the expression, *my day*, limits the text to the personal presence of our Lord. He thus tells the Jews, in another place, that the time shall come when they shall long to see one of *his days*, and shall not see it ;—having rejected the personal presence of the Messiah, they shall thenceforth look for a Messiah in vain. Professor Scholfield conceives the weight of the sentence to hang on *ενα*, but there are a multitude of examples in which it is not *causative* (“ pray



name, and which is thus naturally entitled to be taken as its principal object, JEHOVAH JIREH (*The Lord will provide*) in direct reference to the animal provided at the moment, to supply the place of Isaac. This theory must therefore be abandoned ; and we shall probably come to the fact, that the *Substitution* itself formed the true final purport of the ceremonial. We hear of no conclusion drawn by Abraham to the future sacrifice of the great Atoner, nor of his thenceforth regarding Isaac as a representative of the Messiah, nor of his viewing the transaction in any other light, than as a per-

*that your flight be not in winter*”). The true objection is, that the common translation makes one half of the verse superfluous. But this objection implies that Abraham actually witnessed the earthly existence of the Messiah. And, why not ? if angels are the declared, daily ministers to the people of God ; if they attended on our Lord, in the temptation in the garden, and perhaps at all times ; if, as he declared, they were at his command, by legions ; if, as he equally declared, Abraham was alive in the days of Moses ; and if Moses and Elijah, visibly and bodily, saw and conversed with him at the transfiguration ; if, not merely to selected individuals, but to the whole community of the thrones and powers above, the government of the Church on earth is a perpetual display, for the direct purpose of acquainting them with the “*many-hued*” (πολυποικίλος) and many shaped wisdom of the Deity (Eph. iii. 10.) ; why shall we doubt that the head of the Jewish Church saw the Son of man on earth, and that seeing in him the consummation of the promise, the birth of his most glorious descendant, he must have been filled with exultation, such joy as there is among the saints in Heaven ?

sonal trial of his faith, which issued in a personal blessing.

But, to the Christian the career of Isaac, from his birth to the period of this offering, is typical in the highest degree. The Divine promise of his being born, to be the head of a countless posterity—the joy of the faithful, the scorn of the unbelieving ;—the declaration by angels—the delay, till a time when it seemed hopeless—the birth, at last, only by a Divine interposition—were all palpably realized in the advent of the Messiah.

The process of the offering is not less close and consecutive<sup>1</sup>. The journey of Isaac to the *future site of Jerusalem*—its occupying *three* days—his reaching it on *an ass*—his leaving *his servants behind*, when he was about to be sacrificed—his promise *to return to them*—his bearing the *sacificial wood*, and going to the altar, accompanied *only by his father* ;—his perfect submission at the place of sacrifice—his being *bound* upon the altar, are all palpably descriptive of the principal events of the Messiah's *preparative* for death. But

<sup>1</sup> Our Lord's declaration on his journey towards his place of sacrifice is, " Nevertheless, I must walk to day, and to-morrow, and the *third* day ; for it cannot be that a prophet perish out of Jerusalem."—(Luke xiii. 33.) This passage is put out of its place by the harmonists ; that place would probably be immediately before our Lord's *last* arrival at Jerusalem.

here the similitude breaks off, and the substitution of the ram changes the relation of the whole.

The conclusion, from the total silence of the history, is,—that the knowledge of the type was intended, *not* for Abraham, but for future mankind; and that, in this sense, it was given as a development, *to us*, of the progress of Revelation. The object of the three dispensations was, alike, the forgiveness of sin. In all alike, this forgiveness was, through the merits of the Messiah. But, in the covenant made with Adam after the Fall, little more was declared of the Messiah, than that he should bruize the serpent's head; and little more of sacrifice, than that by a strict compliance with the rite, (doubtless also with a reference to some future merit of the great champion of man,) human guilt should be forgiven. In the second dispensation, the general and obscure idea of a combat with the serpent, gave place to the more exact knowledge, that the champion was to pass through a *human career*, and to undergo *death*<sup>1</sup>; but, that during the *continuance* of the dispensation, his death was to be represented by the death of animals. The use of animal sacrifice (with a knowledge that it was but the *substitute* for a more

<sup>1</sup> Our Lord's sacrifice was not under what is properly called the Jewish Dispensation. The law and the prophets were *until* John.—(Luke xvi. 16.) From that period commenced the declaration of the *approach* of the kingdom.

exalted and final offering,) decidedly formed the leading characteristic of the Jewish dispensation ; and to Abraham, as its head, was thus committed, in the instance of the *first* offspring, born under the promise, the unconscious office of supplying the type which characterized the established religion of his posterity.

## CHAPTER XXIV.

### MOSES.

THE transfer into Egypt was the next memorable change in the condition of Israel. It has been asked, why a transfer was suffered, so hazardous to the simplicity of their manners, their religion, and their independence? The true answer may be, that, hazardous as the measure unquestionably was, it was adopted as a security against the still greater hazard of their extinction as a people.

In this view, the whole progress of the event forms one of the most striking displays of a particular Providence. As the time was still distant when the Israelites were to be put in possession of the land of Canaan; a time to be regulated by two circumstances, the arrival of the Canaanite population at the degree of iniquity, where long-suffering must be exhausted; and the fitness of the Israelites, in point of numbers, to hold the land; some provision must be made for their existence during a period of nearly 300 years. They could not have remained in Palestine with any degree

of safety; for, by a sudden invasion, about twenty-seven years before, of the savage tribes expelled from Egypt, the greater part of the former inhabitants had been conquered, the Philistine shepherds were masters, and their fierceness and idolatry must have finally exterminated or corrupted the descendants of Jacob. In this difficulty, what expedient can be conceived more effectual, than the transfer of the whole family to the protection of a great, intelligent, and warlike kingdom, lying so close to Palestine, that the return might be merely a march across a frontier. We have no knowledge that Egypt at this time was idolatrous. Its religion was probably altogether free from idol worship; when we find Joseph allying himself to the daughter of the high priest, acting as prime minister of the country, and securing to the priesthood their original property, in the time of a general alienation of lands<sup>1</sup>. But some

<sup>1</sup> Joseph has been charged by Infidelity (*Larcher, &c.*) with making a treacherous bargain for the people, and even reducing them to slavery. But the charge arises from disregarding the text. The evident fact is, that he changed the old severe tenure of their property for one of remarkable advantage. The land was originally divided into three parts, by the constitution of Menes; the king, the priesthood, and the soldiery, having each a third. In the famine, all the lands were sold to the government for food; the general holding of property was thus changed; and the king, thus becoming the general proprietor, was enabled to make a new distribution of a more equal kind. The *whole* of the lands were now *given to the people*, at the rent of a

preparative for the reception of Israel might be of value, peculiarly in the instance of strangers coming from a hostile and wild country. ("ye are spies, to see the nakedness of the land ye are come"). And the preparative had been made by the extraordinary advancement of Joseph to royal confidence, to public gratitude, and to distinction among the learned and priestly class (of whom the king himself was always one). But the casualty might yet arise, of their being lost among the Egyptians? The expedient against this natural consequence, was their being sent to Goshen; a settlement *selected by Joseph*, for the express purpose of separating them from the nation—"Ye shall say, Thy servants' trade hath been about cattle, *that ye may dwell in the land of Goshen*; for every shepherd is an abomination to the Egyptians." The separation being thus secured by the double obstacle of an isolated district, and an occupation scorned in Egyptian eyes, the Israelite family of seventy souls were left in peace, to augment during a hundred years. But the increase was still regulated by an especial

*fifth* part of the produce to the crown—the land of the priesthood only excepted; Joseph, in his wisdom, clearly, not thinking fit to make the religious establishment of the country a dependent on either the people or the crown. This agreement fully met the national approbation; the people saying, "Thou hast saved our lives," and tendering anew their allegiance, (Gen. xlvii. 25.)

Divine reference to their return. "When the time of the promise drew nigh, which God had sworn to Abraham, the people grew and multiplied in Egypt." It is also obvious that this increase, by compelling them to spread beyond the narrow land of Goshen<sup>1</sup>, must have exposed the Israelites to a close intercourse with the Egyptians, long before they had amounted to the three millions who were to march for Palestine.

The tyranny of the existing Egyptian king, a Pharaoh "who knew not Joseph," was now converted into the actual means of their religious purity. Egypt had sunk into the grossest worship of idols: that worship has had powerful attractions for the vice and ignorance of man in every age; and the Israelites, spreading freely through the fields and cities of this opulent, voluptuous, and idolatrous community, must soon have imbibed the infection of its manners. But the old separation of space was to be followed by a new separation of feeling. It was the Israelite who once drew the line: it was the Egyptian who drew it now. The monarch,

<sup>1</sup> Goshen lay immediately contiguous to Palestine (1 Chron. vii. 21.) and extended southward, perhaps as far as Heliopolis, including partly those places on the Nile, which, from the Epics of Heliodorus, we know under the name of Bucolia, a marshy tract overgrown with weeds, and fit only for pasture; partly those deserts towards the East, where the wandering hordes found some sustenance for their sheep. (*Michaelis on the Laws of Moses.*)



in real or feigned alarm at their numbers ; by a policy not uncommon in the East, degraded the whole people into Helotism, and embittered the loss of liberty by the heaviest tasks of the slave. "The Egyptians made their lives bitter with hard bondage <sup>1</sup>." But the suffering was salutary. Nothing could be more effectual to alienate Israel from the habits, worship, and corruptions, of the idolator.

The hatred of the slave, and the severity of the tyrant, grow together by nature. At the period when the Deliverer of Israel was about to be born, an act of more than savage cruelty consummated the oppression. A command was issued for the general destruction of the male infants. Moses was born nearly under the first promulgation of this decree ; for it was not in force at the birth of Aaron, but three years before. Yet, as if for the express purpose of showing with what completeness the Divine wisdom baffles the malice of man, the daughter of the tyrant himself was made the instrument of counteracting his decree ; the Court became the place in which Moses acquired the qualities essential to the deliverance of the people ; and even his name seems a direct contempt of the royal will <sup>2</sup>.

At the age of forty Moses abandoned the

<sup>1</sup> Exod. i. 14.

<sup>2</sup> Moses—"preserved from the water."

tempting prospects open in the Egyptian palace to the adopted son of the princess, and to a character already high in public opinion, "mighty in words and deeds<sup>1</sup>." The fallen state of his countrymen urged him to the heroic desire of rekindling a sense of their dignity—"For he supposed that his brethren would have understood how that God by his hand would deliver them<sup>2</sup>."

The course of the narrative is strikingly natural. His first act, on returning among them, was to set the example of that conduct by which, in the hasty calculation of a daring and indignant spirit, the deliverance was alone to be effected. He fell, sword in hand, on the first Egyptian whom he saw assaulting an Israelite, and slew him. He had yet to learn, that the deliverance of Israel was to be by a higher agency than the sword of man. But he found on this occasion, that the heart of the people was unequal to the bold attempt of breaking their chains; that he had exposed himself to the royal vengeance for nothing. And, apparently, in the disgust which a gallant and lofty mind would be the first to feel; he threw up the attempt at once, and leaving his degenerate countrymen to their fate, plunged into the desert, and for forty years was lost to the world.

But the ways of God are often memorably dis-

<sup>1</sup> Acts vii. 22.

Acts vii. 25.

tinguished from the ways of man. The Israelite redemption, which was refused to the warrior and the patriot, in the glow of manly feeling and the vigour of manly life ; was to be imposed upon the shepherd ; in the chill of life and feeling, with his hopes extinguished, and his habits alienated alike from the works of council and the field. At the age of eighty ! Moses was summoned from the sheep-fold ! to take the command of the hosts of Israel. The bold prince and soldier was now shrunk into the “ meekest man of the earth.” He successively pleaded his obscurity, and his want of eloquence ; and when both pleas were refuted, he expressly declined the mission. Then, “ the anger of the Lord was kindled,” and Aaron was joined with him, as a divider of the honours which he might have possessed alone.

But the original nobleness of his nature had not perished. Habits, views, powers, and purposes, are the creatures of time, and may sink with time. But the native mind is buoyant, and floats above all, to the last. When Moses finally takes upon him the Divine commission, his obedience exhibits the strong sincerity of his character. His resolution is then formed once and for ever. He bids farewell to Midian and its ties ; hazards all that is dear to human nature upon the event, and, placing his wife and children on their beasts of burthen, begins his perilous journey, never to return.

In Egypt, the long affliction of the Israelites had already wrought its natural consequence; the stubborn or insensible spirit which had once repelled the deliverer was subdued. “And the people *believed*; and when they heard that the Lord had visited the children of Israel, and that he had looked upon their affliction, then *they bowed their heads* and worshipped.” But another consequence, equally natural, was combined with this submissiveness; their courage was totally broken. A new demand for their labour, made by the tyrant, suddenly extinguished all their confidence in Moses; and the most solemn promises of deliverance were listened to with alternate scorn and despair. “Thou hast made our favour to be abhorred in the sight of Pharaoh,” was the popular outcry. “They heard not, for anguish of spirit and for cruel bondage,” are the words of the historian.

With such materials, to achieve any great national act of intrepidity was plainly impossible. The course of Providence in the reinstatement of nations, almost uniformly, is to let them work out their own freedom; thus rendering the struggle a school of the hardihood and intelligence essential to its preservation. But now, for the first time, and the last, in history, the deliverance of a nation was to be wrought without a struggle or a suffering; and, by a not less extraordinary distinction, the instruments throughout were to be two indivi-

duals, and but two ; and those, without wealth, ancient name, personal vigour, or popular ability—the one an Egyptian slave, the other an Egyptian fugitive, separated from each other for half a century, and both verging on the grave.

The *exclusive* display of Divine agency in this instance, so unexampled in the general providential government ; seems capable of being accounted for only by the peculiar object of the restoration—the establishment of a people as the *depositories of a religion*. The impression most important for a purpose of this order would be, the incontestible superiority of the God of that religion. This evidence was to be obtained chiefly by the contest in which Israel was involved with Egypt. The Egyptian king and his religion, totally discomfited by the direct power of the God of the Jews, would supply it in the most ample manner. All the share which human qualities might claim in the victory, must, so far, tend to enfeeble the evidence. And thus, the Ten Plagues are expressly declared to have been inflicted “to show the wrath of Heaven, and to *make its power known* <sup>1</sup>.”

<sup>1</sup> Rom. ix. 21.

## CHAPTER XXV.

### THE TEN PLAGUES.

THE learning which has been lavished on the subject of the Plagues of Egypt is boundless ; but some of the most natural elucidations of those stupendous displays have still been forgotten<sup>1</sup>. The point of interest with *us*, in events so remote, must be chiefly, how far their circumstances give proof of Divine design ; a conclusion of equal importance to every era of man. In this light, they supply striking, yet, hitherto, not much observed, testimony.

The succession of the Plagues is distinctly regulated on principle, and that principle the gradation of pain. Of all pain, the lowest class is that which arises from the mere offence of the senses ; the next is bodily suffering ; the last is mental,—in all its stages, up to preternatural terror, an un-

<sup>1</sup> The plagues occupied nearly four months, from the beginning of January to the night of the Passover, in April. The number of the Israelites who marched for Palestine was 600,000 men above twenty with a mixed multitude (probably the children of Egyptian and Israelite marriages); the whole, of all ages, with women and children, amounting to about three millions.

rivalled agony which often amounts to the extinction of reason, or of life. The succession of the plagues is thus addressed to the three sources of human susceptibility,—the senses, the body, and the mind.

The first three plagues—the turning of the waters into blood, the frogs, and the lice, only repel the senses; and they alone are shared by the Israelites, to whose vanity this harmless suffering may have been an useful lesson. They are also those alone in which the Egyptians make any attempt to rival the Divine power. Thenceforth the true torture begins, and all is the acknowledged supremacy of indignant and irresistible miracle.

The three succeeding plagues are *torment* on man and beast: the intolerable stings of the hornet; pestilence among the cattle; and ulcers on the population, from the throne to the dungeon.

The next three are terror, arising from phenomena, of a preternatural intensity and havoc, which must have crushed and prostrated the national heart. The first, a loosened uproar of the elements, an unexampled and hideous storm of hail, whirlwind, and fire, which ravaged the whole face of the land, slaying all that had life in the field, and sweeping before it the harvest, every herb, and every tree. “There was none like it in the land of Egypt since it became a nation.” We can perfectly conceive a tempest

that would thus stun or madden every sense of man ; The thunder, a perpetual roar ; the hail, a cataract of ice-bolts ; the fire, an unbroken sheet of flame, wrapping the earth and the heavens.—The second was the proverbial terror of the East, and one of the most resistless and fearful ministers of desolation. A flight of locusts, vaster and more dreadful than had ever been known, extinguishing the last vestige of life in the soil. “ Very grievous were they ; before them there were no such locusts, neither after them shall there be any such ; for they covered the face of the whole land, so that the land was darkened.”—The third was a total darkness for three days ; a depth of gloom, which even the language of Scripture labours to describe ; “ *a thick darkness, which might be felt,*” probably, even more than an utter absence of light, an actual thickening of the atmosphere, like the gloom and vapours of a sepulchre. The horror of this plague instantly paralysed all movement in the land. No man “ rose from his place for the three days.”

The Jewish traditions fill those days with all the objects of undefinable terror. A fine passage of the book of Wisdom, which emulates the richness and the force of poetry, describes the nation as—“ shut up in their houses, the prisoners of darkness, astonished with strange apparitions, *sad visions appearing unto them, with heavy countenances !* No power of fire able to give



them light; the flames of the stars extinguished; only there appeared to them a fire, kindled of itself, very dreadful; for, being much terrified, they thought the things which they saw to be worse than the sight which they saw not. And, as for the illusions of magic, they were put down; for they that promised to drive away terrors and troubles from a sick soul, were sick themselves of fear; and, being scared with beasts that passed by, and the hissing of serpents, they died of fear. For wickedness, by her own witness, is very timorous; and, being pressed with conscience, always forecasteth grievous things<sup>1</sup>."

But, without those imaginative details, the plague *must* have been capable of exciting the most consummate awe and alarm. Every Egyptian must have already known that the afflictions of the land were the judgments of the irresistible Lord of the Hebrews, for the long course of national cruelty to his people. They were now fully in his hand; and who could tell how much further his vengeance might lead? With their cattle destroyed, and the whole produce of the ground, the early and the later harvest, ruined by the storm and the locust; nothing but the most active exertion could save them from perishing by famine. But they felt all exertion suddenly brought to a stand by a new infliction from Heaven: the labours of the field and the city,

<sup>1</sup> Book of Wisdom xvii. 3, &c.

commerce, the whole vigour and animation of society, chained up, at the moment, in a darkness which absolutely precluded all effort, and of which no human conjecture could fix the termination. What man could decide that the universal chill and suspension of the national pulse might not continue, till Egypt should perish of famine? The land was a living sepulchre at the time : who could tell how soon it might contain nothing but its own dead ?

It is possible, also, that the shortening of this plague may have had some reference to this result of its prolongation. A few days longer, and all life must have failed, through the mere inability to procure food. But it was evidently no part of the Divine purpose to inflict a serious loss of Egyptian life, before the final demonstration of power, in the rescue of the Israelites by the death of the first-born. That object once accomplished, Egyptian life was spared no longer ; and the drowning of the army in the Red Sea probably destroyed, along with the king, the chief nobility and warriors of the kingdom ; the cavalry and chariots forming, at all times, the choicer force of Eastern armies. In this plague alone, we have no supplication on the part of the king ; no terminating act on that of Moses. It was defined by the sole decision of Providence.

In all points of view, the ten Plagues exhibit the palpable interference of a power above acci-

dent or man. The share of Israel in the first three plagues, and their exemption in all the rest, shows that they possessed no personal peculiarity which could exempt them; and that their subsequent privilege must, therefore, have been providential.

The prediction of the whole result, the death of the first-born, the opulence<sup>1</sup>, and the triumphant march of the people from bondage, had been given to Moses, *before* he had even entered Egypt. In all points of view, Chance is totally out of the question.

A reference to the *fitness* of the plagues has been long observed, in the gory transformation of the Nile, the instrument of Hebrew infanticide; and in the “ashes of the *furnace*,” as the scene of their

<sup>1</sup> The cavil raised on this “spoil of the Egyptians” has been frequently noticed, as arising from our translating the *לָקַח*, *to borrow*, instead of *to demand*, as we translate it in the passage in Samuel (i. 28); where Hannah *gives* the first-born which she had *asked* from the Lord. But, without referring to this usual meaning of the word, the nature of the transaction shows that it could not have been understood by the Egyptians in any other sense than that of a demand for wealth which was never to be returned. What expectation of repayment could they have from a multitude who were leaving their country “with a high hand,” with the most distinct evidences of having achieved a triumph over them, and leaving it either to be buried in the desert, or to take possession of a new kingdom. The Egyptians *purchased* their retreat, a practice not uncommon in ancient hostilities.

<sup>2</sup> Exod. vii. 5.

peculiar toils. But, if we possessed an exact account of the progress of the Israelite sufferings, we probably might trace the connexion closer still. Josephus tells us, that one of the first expedients to thin the numbers of the Israelites, was to force them to the unwholesome work of making canals and embankments in *the marshes*, where they must have been tormented by the loathsome reptiles and insects of the swamp.—The forced building of the fortresses of Pithon and Rameses, on the borders of the Desert, must have equally exposed them to the hornet, which, in Arabia, is still a dreadful scourge.—The loss of their cattle, and the breaking out of disease among the Israelites, would be the natural consequence of a fiery soil, and of the labours of the Israelite herdsmen in so new and exhausting an employment as serving in the Egyptian brick-kilns<sup>1</sup>.—The devastation of the Egyptian harvest by the storm and the locust, might have only retaliated the scanty food of the miserable slave.—How many of them too must have groaned out their lives in the darkness of the dungeon! for, unquestionably, the tyranny which began with the massacre of the children, would not stop at any minor cruelty which promised to break the spirit of the fathers.

<sup>1</sup> The easing his *shoulder of the burthens*, and his hands of *the making of pots*, are among the Psalmist's instances of the Divine relief to Israel.

Philo's remark on the trivial nature of the means by which the Egyptians were punished, has been justly panegyrised. "Why were not the lions and panthers sent to overrun Egypt? Because it was the Divine wish to afflict, but not to destroy. Why were reptiles and insects the instruments? Because they showed that the feeblest means, in the Divine hand, were irresistible<sup>1</sup>."

<sup>1</sup> The favourite theory on the subject of the plagues, is that which owes its revival to Bryant; namely, that a prominent purpose was the public humiliation of the Egyptian worship of the Nile, the hornet, the bull, the sun, &c. But the theory is unsubstantial. The Egyptian worship was so unsparing, that if the plagues were to be effected by the use of *any* natural instruments, they must have made use of some of the national deities; for, from light to darkness, from the eagle to the gnat, and from the crocodile to the worm, Egypt bowed down to every thing; or, as in the passage which seems to have expressly referred to this frenzied universality of homage, to all in "heaven above, and the earth beneath, and the waters under the earth." Besides, the principle, to be available, should be regular: it should be *humiliation* in all instances, or in none. But, if the worship of the Nile, the bull, the sun, &c. were degraded by the corruption of the river, by the murrain, and the darkness; that of the hornet, or of the elements, or of the locust, was *not* degraded, but rather invested with additional effect, from the evidence of their extraordinary powers of devastation. Bryant's refuge in those instances is, that the Egyptian was here punished by his deities. But, independently of this being a shifting of the principle, it is still insufficient. The Egyptian never could have worshipped the storm, the hornet, or the locust, as ministers of beneficence. He must have worshipped them as objects of fear, as the African of this

day worships dæmons. And all accession to their power in this sense must have justified the worshipper, not in sudden contempt, but in increased awe, and its consequent homage. In the plague of the frogs, he gives up the principle altogether, conceiving that "whether the frog, among the Egyptians, were an object of veneration or not, it was equally consistent, to punish them by what they abominated, or what they revered." But it is evident, that unless they *worshipped* it, the lesson, in a religious aspect, must have been totally thrown away. A system of this unhesitating order is obviously too pliant for solidity.

## CHAPTER XXVI.

### THE LAW OF MOSES.

THE progress of Israelite restoration supplies continued evidence of the Divine agency. When the first vision was given to Moses in the desert, it was declared, that the spot where he then stood, a lonely keeper of sheep, should see him a leader, should be covered with the myriads of Israel, and be a place for the free worship of Jehovah. "When *thou* hast brought forth the people out of Egypt, ye shall serve God upon *this mountain* <sup>1</sup>." On the fiftieth day from their leaving Egypt, the people worshipping at the foot of Horeb, received the Ten Commandments, the principles of the moral law, and distinguished by being the only portion delivered by the voice of God.

The limits of these pages preclude that detailed inquiry into the Mosaic Law, which cannot be candidly pursued by any understanding without producing the amplest conviction that it was the

<sup>1</sup> Exod. iii. 12.

work of God in his wisdom, justice, and mercy. The cavils of infidelity on its principles are almost worn away. In our day they are chiefly reduced to "its omission of the doctrine of the immortality of the soul." But, those who bring this omission as a charge against the law of Moses, overlook the fact, that Moses was appointed to communicate, not a *religion*, but a law. The Jewish nation already possessed a religion. For their ritual, they had an initiatory rite, a sacred day, an act of worship, and an act of covenant; for their belief, they had the faith of the Messiah; and the hope of a renewed existence in a state of happiness. We are distinctly told, in the Epistle to the Hebrews, that all the patriarchs *died in faith*, looking for a heavenly country<sup>1</sup>. Thus they had a religion prior to the law, as much as we have a religion subsequent to it. For what have we, but an initiatory rite, a sacred day, a public worship, and an act of covenant, the

<sup>1</sup> The ordinances of the law, relative to sacrifices and festivals, are but the natural work of civil government; matters of ceremonial, founded indeed on the religion, but regulated by the authority of the state.

Even the Ten Commandments, the most solemnly delivered portion of the law, and the ground-work of the whole, are simply prohibitory; the only portion of them which speaks of God, consisting of three *prohibitions*,—against worshipping a plurality of gods—against idols—and against perjury. The whole three, from the circumstance that God was their *King*, being *civil crimes*.



Christian passover! Our belief, like theirs, consists in faith in the Messiah, and hope of the "heavenly country."

Those objectors not less overlook the fact, that a religion and a law are incapable of being combined, as *systems*, in one code. They differ in their essences, provinces, and objects. It is true that the only solid foundation of law must be the acknowledgment of a God, for this is the only solid foundation of human duties; but this acknowledgment is not a religion. The essence of religion is hope; of law fear. The object of religion is virtue, of law order. The province of religion extends immeasurably beyond the grave; law stops at the grave.

The difference is equally marked in their means. The chief instrument of religion is faith; of law fact. Religion acts by rewards, as well as punishments. Law knows nothing of rewards. Religion sets no limits to mercy; law, as such, knows nothing of mercy; if pardon come, it must come from a source above law. Religion gives all things to penitence. Law has no ear for penitence. Religion is the government of a father and a king, guided by sympathy, long-suffering, and affection. Law is the decision of a judge, bound by established rule, abstract, and inflexible.

Still, it is not to be questioned, that the Mosaic

code was worthy of its Divine origin. St. Paul declares it "holy, just, and good." In the very act of reprobating the Jew, for erecting it into an instrument of salvation, (in other words, confounding a law with a religion,) he pronounces its excellence to be such, that if salvation by a law were not an impossibility, the law of Moses deserved, that, by it salvation should have come. The Apostolic argument throughout is, that law, being only a definition and denouncement of crime, it is out of the nature of things that it should be the instrument of a salvation, which depends on human penitence and Divine pardon. He thus separates by an impassable line, the *law* of Moses and the *religion* of the Jew, which was the religion of Abraham, which was the belief in the virtue of sacrifice,—a belief founded on the merits of the common Redeemer of Jew and Christian.

Yet, the omission of the doctrine of immortality is strictly limited to the *law*, technically so called. The general Scripture, the "law and the prophets," those vast, various, and luminous developments of the rule of the Divine King, are full of the doctrine. Immortality forms the great announcement, purpose, and principle of inspiration; sometimes shadowed under types and allusions; sometimes starting full upon the eye. We find it growing in magnitude and splendour throughout the Scriptures; from the grey, oriental

dawn of prophecy, in Job, to the setting sunshine that covers Malachi with light, the broader and more effulgent, as it goes down.

The Samaritans, who received only the Pentateuch, believed in the resurrection and the judgment; in other words, held the doctrine of immortality. But, passing from the authority of man to the declaration of God; "Search the Scriptures," says our Lord to the Jews, "for in them ye think (rather, it is your *conviction*, your judgment, *δοκεῖτε*,) that ye have *eternal life*<sup>1</sup>." He pronounces that the Sadducees, in denying the existence of spirits and the resurrection, showed only their ignorance of the *declaration to Moses*, that Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob were then *alive*, four hundred years after their being laid in the grave. St. Paul, in the explication of his faith to Felix, states that he "worships the God of his fathers, in a way which, though the Jews of his time called heresy, he had adopted from believing all things which are written in the *law and the prophets*," and that he had "hope towards God, which *they themselves also allowed*, that there shall be a *resurrection of the dead*;" obviously allowed also from the law and the prophets, the only authority which he and the Jews could recognize in common<sup>2</sup>.

<sup>1</sup> John v. 35.

<sup>2</sup> The allusions from the time of David are many; but it is admitted by Warburton, that from that period the doctrine had begun to make its way among the Jews.

The expressions, that the Fathers “died in faith,” not having enjoyed the promises, but “desiring

The celebrity of Bishop Warburton's “Divine Legation of Moses” does no distinguished honour to the theological intelligence of his age. The work remains to us as an example of the extraordinary delusions which may be suffered to cloud a presumptuous, though an active, mind. Arrogant and ambitious by nature, Warburton cherished a passion for paradox. To find that an idea had been abandoned by every other man as hopeless, was enough to give it a claim on his adoption for life. His defence of Pope's fatalism is as prominent an evidence of this perverse fondness for difficulty, as his attempt to sustain the inspiration of Moses by the proof of a negative. Like all the *αυροδιδακτοι*, he wasted his strength in encounters, which an earlier discipline of his understanding would have shown him to be desperate. Colleges, if they do nothing else, at least sober the insolence of the mind. They would have saved this ardent, subtle, and even learned person, from leaving us little more than the moral of the attempt to atchieve impossibilities by improbabilities.

His argument in the “Divine Legation” is reducible to three propositions.

1. That the Mosaic dispensation contains *no* reference whatever to the immortality of the soul.
2. That the codes of all human legislators *are founded* on the doctrine of that immortality.
3. That the codes of all human legislators *must be* so founded.

The whole three are visionary ; for, first, the *entire sacrificial* portion of the law has reference to a *future state*, the *principle* of all its greater and less sacrifices alike, being the blood-shedding of the Messiah for future redemption, a principle established from the beginning of the world.

Secondly, he has adduced no evidence (for none exists) that any human legislator *founded* his code on the idea of a future

a better country" even than the one they trod, "a heavenly;" and that "Moses esteemed the reproach of *Christ* greater than the treasures of Egypt," could have had but one meaning in the lips of the Apostle, and that meaning the Gospel, with its promises of immortality, and that announcement the language of inspiration. St. Paul goes further

state; though they may all have acknowledged its existence, as they found it the popular belief. The case of Zeleucus the Locrian, on which he especially relies, amounts to no more than the common warning, to provide against remorse in the hopelessness and pain of the death-bed, by a life of rectitude. The words of Zeleucus are, "that they should set before themselves the dreadful hour of death, at which they must all arrive, when the memory of evil actions will seize the criminal with remorse, accompanied with the fruitless wish that he had submitted his actions to the rule of justice." This is the strength of the argument, and it is nothing.

Thirdly, nothing can be easier than to conceive a code formed *without any reference* to a future state. What reference has the *law* of any nation, living or dead, to a future state, as an instrument of procuring civil obedience; the only purpose which law, as such, can contemplate? That the belief in immortality is one of the finest and most enduring principles even of earthly obedience, is beyond a doubt; but its origin, support, and duties, are under the care of a higher code than was ever made by man.

It is to be regretted that we are still without a treatise on the Law of Moses, suitable to the requisitions of our time. Spencer is learned, but he is erroneous, prejudiced, and obsolete; Michaelis is learned and sagacious, but he insults Scripture by the pollution of his own gross mind; Graves is free from those disabilities of his predecessors; but the subject is still ample and still *open*.

still, and in his appeal to the Jews at Antioch, expressly declares, that redemption by Christ, authenticated by his rising from the dead, was *the promise*. “The promise which was made unto the Fathers, God hath fulfilled the same to us their children, in that he hath *raised up* Jesus again <sup>1</sup>.”

<sup>1</sup> Acts xiii. 32, &c.

## CHAPTER XXVII.

### THE TABERNACLE.

THE construction of the tabernacle occupies a singularly large share of the Divine communication in the Book of Exodus; and its conformity to the Divine idea was additionally provided for by a model shown to Moses in the Mount. The cause of this extraordinary care must be looked for in more than the visible importance of the little temple of the tribes. The value of places where the people may assemble for public worship without disturbance from external things, is easily conceived. But the tabernacle was *not* for the reception of the people. In the external area, 150 feet long by 75 broad, all that could belong to popular worship was performed. There stood the brazen laver and the great altar of burnt-offerings. The tabernacle in the centre was closed to all but the priesthood.

It would be endless to enumerate, and impossible to reconcile, the variety of opinions which have existed relative to the Mosaic tabernacle.

By some authorities it is supposed to have been borrowed from the idol caverns and dark shrines of Egypt—a conjecture totally inconsistent with the abhorrence of the whole Mosaic Polity for paganism, and especially for the paganism of a country which still had too strong a hold on the minds of a sensual people. By others it is conceived to represent heaven. By others the Holy Place is regarded as the emblem of this world, and the Holy of Holies as that of the world to come <sup>1</sup>.

<sup>1</sup> This idea is founded on translating the words “*αγιον κοσμικον*”—a “mundane sanctuary.” Our common version is, a “worldly sanctuary;” both equally in direct contradiction to the context. But the entire passage offers an instructive example of the utter emptiness of verbal criticism. Wetstein and Bishop Middleton contend for “mundane” as the meaning of “*κοσμικον*.” Wakefield pronounces it “furniture.” A whole host insist that it implies “magnificent:” others that it means “earthly and degraded:” some that *κοσμικον* must be the substantive; others that *αγιον*; others that neither. Bishop Middleton asserts, that to sustain our translation the article is essential. Others, equally determined, assert, that no article at all is necessary; and that, if it were, the Bishop has fixed his favourite article on the wrong word: others settle the controversy by denying the existence of the word itself in Greek.

Yet, shrinking from this “confusion worse confounded;” the common custom of all language tells us, that the adjective, by usage, can acquire the force of the substantive. What would those critics make of “the true *sublime*,” or of the similar phrases in all tongues. But the battle extends to the “*πρωτη*,” which forms the distinction of the two sanctuaries, but which a crowd



Perfectly possible as it is, that there may be some solemn likeness between things in earth and things in heaven—(a likeness, however, which must be neither fitted nor *intended* for our faculties)—still,

of those authorities pronounce to mean, “the original earthly tabernacle,” as contrasted with the “heavenly.” The whole passage, however, is perfectly clear to common apprehensions. St. Paul, insisting upon the superior ministry of Christ, says of the two sanctuaries—“The first (the outer) sanctuary, had an established worship and sacred furniture. For this was the plan of the tabernacle. There was the outer sanctuary (the anterior, *πρωτη*,) which had the lamps, and the table, and the show bread, which (sanctuary) is called the Holy. But within the second veil was the sanctuary, which is called the Holy of Holies, which had the golden censer and the ark of the covenant,—wherein were the golden pot of manna, and Aaron’s rod that budded, and the tables of the covenant.”

Even the censer generates a controversy. Kuinoel, Grotius, &c. conceive that it *did not* remain in the sanctuary; others that it *did*, but was annually superseded by another; others, that it was never left behind; others, that it was no censer at all, but an altar. The whole difficulty arising from overlooking the obvious fact, that the Holy of Holies, though entered but once a year for the solemnities of sacrifice, must, like every other part of the tabernacle, have been kept in repair, cleaned, and set in order for the service, by the servants of the Temple. The censer might thus have remained during the year *within* the veil, which was its proper place; but might have been brought out on the eve of the great ceremony for the use of the High Priest, which was its proper purpose. We know that in the marches of the tribes in the wilderness, the *whole* tabernacle was entered, taken to pieces, and put together by the Levite attendants, as it happened to be necessary.

none of the theories hitherto proposed relieve the difficulties which naturally arise out of the subject. Why there should have been *two* sanctuaries, and no more?—Why, while the outer sanctuary was open to the daily services of the several priesthood, the inner was closed to all but the High Priest, and to him on all days but one in the year, and that the day of national Atonement?—Why, while the outer sanctuary was adorned with golden table and lamp, golden urns, and the furniture of a royal banquet, the inner contained but the censer and ark of the covenant?—Why the veil of the inner sanctuary was totally rent on the day of the crucifixion?—Why both the sanctuaries ceased to exist soon after, and have never been restored?

St. Paul's declarations of the office of our Lord, as the Minister of a "better covenant," form the ground of the theory now proposed, and which seems to offer a plain solution to all those difficulties. This theory, with respect to the two sanctuaries, is,—that they represented the *Jewish and Christian dispensations*; and, with respect to the ark of the covenant,—that it represented *Paradise*.

First, as to the two sanctuaries. Until the appointed time of Christianity, Judaism was to be the authorized religion; the Holy Place, its representative, was therefore to continue open. Christianity was practically non-existent; the

Holy of Holies, its representative, was therefore to continue closed. Yet, as Christianity virtually lived in the promise to Abraham, an indication was to be given, even in that closed sanctuary, alike of its relation to Judaism, its nature, and its spiritual superiority. The Holy of Holies was to be entered only through the Holy Place ; for Judaism was to be the preliminary to Christianity. The Holy of Holies, with the High Priest, (the acknowledged representative of the Messiah) for its sole minister ;—with its single day of opening in the year—(the year itself being a representative of all time)—and with its single sacrifice, sufficient for the whole national sin ; depicted a coming religion, in which the Messiah alone was to be the offerer ; the offering was to be made once and for ever ; and the atonement was to be universal.

But the spiritual superiority of the coming religion was to be shown not only in this representative superiority, of the High Priest to the other orders of the priesthood, of his one solemn sacrifice to the various and perpetual offerings of the outer sanctuary, and of the high day of national atonement to the common and daily ministrations of the altar ; but in the furnishing and circumstances of the two sanctuaries. The Holy of Holies, divested of all the tangible human pomps of worship, containing only the censer and the ark of the covenant, lighted by no earthly illumination, but by the glory that sat between the

cherubim, gave the distinct emblem of a religion whose essence was spirituality, and which required nothing of the costly ceremonial and earthly magnificence of Judaism ; a religion, in which the only offering of the worshipper was to be the incense of prayer ; the only object immortality (designated by the ark); and the only light, the light from Heaven.

But the time of Christianity came at last. In the day of the great year of the world's existence, appointed from the beginning ; Christ, the high priest after the unchangeable order of Melchizedec, alone, offered up his sacrifice, a propitiation for the "sins of the whole world." In that hour, the veil<sup>1</sup>, which had so long hidden the Holy of Holies, was totally and finally rent in twain, "torn from top to bottom." Judaism was thenceforth to merge into Christianity. The two sanctuaries were now one. The true Israelite and the Christian were to be fellow-worshippers in the same temple ; which was no longer to have any narrower confines than the earth, or any more limited homage than the adoration of all the races of men. But, when the reality has come, the emblem naturally passes away. Within a few years, the Jewish Temple, with both its sanctuaries and their services, was extinguished, and the world

<sup>1</sup> The outer sanctuary also was closed by a curtain, termed "the hanging" of the tabernacle of the congregation. (Exod. xxvii. 36.) It was the curtain of the Holy of Holies that was properly termed "the veil." (Ibid. xxvii. 31.)

has never seen, and shall never see, their revival.

The Ark of the Covenant is a subject of equal importance, and has been equally mistaken. It must be useless to more than advert to the conjectures, which have been offered as explanations of this most magnificent and impressive of all the emblems of Judæism. Some writers have conceived it to represent the throne of Deity in heaven: others, by a more extended sense, heaven itself. The cherubim have been conceived by some, the general emblems of Providence; by others, the Ogdoad, or *eight* persons in the ark, corresponding to their twice four faces; though this idea leaves us to account as we may for their wings, their position, and the various aspects of those faces. Others have even held them to be imitations of the compounded Egyptian and Indian symbols, sphinxes, &c. But some have approached nearer the truth, and conceiving the Holy of Holies to represent the garden of Eden, have supposed the ark, with its cherubim, to represent the guard which kept the gate against the steps of man<sup>1</sup>.

The theory now proposed is, that *the ark of the covenant itself was the direct emblem of Paradise*. In this, as in the former instance, the clearest test of the various theories is, their answer to

<sup>1</sup> Hales, Faber, &c.

the questions which suggest themselves upon the subject,—Why were the tables of the Law, and the golden vessel which held the manna, placed within the ark? Why were the cherubim fixed upon it, overshadowing it with their wings? Why did the glory rest between the cherubim? Why was its lid, or door, expressly called the mercy-seat? (*propitiatory*, *ἱλαστήριον*.) Why was that door sprinkled with the blood on the day of atonement? Why was the ark kept exclusively in the Holy of Holies, and unseen but by the high priest? Why has it perished, without restoration?

The result of the original fall had been the loss of Paradise: the result of the sacrifice of the Messiah was to be the possession of a Paradise, of which the garden of Eden, with its human enjoyments, was the foretaste. It was the Divine will that, until the coming of the Messiah, there should be an existing testimony of the original crime and its consequences. In the ante-diluvian world, this testimony existed, in the visible presence of Paradise, with the cherubic guard, and the Divine flame, which prohibited human entrance. In the Jewish dispensation, this testimony was preserved, in the ark of the covenant, whose door, like the gate of Paradise, was guarded by the cherubim, and on which sat the actual glory of the Lord.

The two great characteristics of Paradise were—the tree of knowledge, by which came death;

and the tree of immortality. By the express command of God to Moses, the ark contained the two corresponding characteristics—the tables of the law, and the vessel of manna. The Law of works, (by which was “*the knowledge of sin,*”) being confessedly the law of death; and the manna, (the bread which came down from heaven,) being as confessedly the emblem of “that bread, which he who tastes shall never die,”—the food of immortality.

Still, the gate of Paradise was not to be shut for ever. The door of the ark of the covenant was named the propitiatory; in sign that its opening was to be through the work of the Divine propitiation; and was sprinkled with the blood of the sacrifice on the day of atonement, in sign that, by the blood of the great sacrifice was the propitiation to be made.

It is remarkable that this largest and most splendid work, of all that the tabernacle contained, should not have been displayed to the popular eye, in a religion and service which so highly cultivated pomp of worship; but that its golden frame and its cherubim should have been enclosed in the inner sanctuary, and shut up, through all ages, from the national knowledge. Yet this position only reinforces the proof of its purpose. Paradise was to be opened, not by Judæism, but by Christianity. The emblem belonged to Christianity; and it was, therefore,

retained in the Holy of Holies, the sanctuary that represented the religion.

But, like the sanctuaries, when the reality came, the emblem passed away. The death of the Messiah had accomplished the victory, by which the gates of Paradise were to be opened to mankind ; and, abolishing the law of works, (the fatal tree by which Paradise was lost,) and offering immortality (the tree of life) freely to all, replaced the whole human race, (who shall accept the terms of redemption,) in a state of higher security than that of their first father,—a state to enjoy the celestial Paradise for ever, without fear of a fall.

Aaron's "rod that budded" was laid up "before the ark," probably as an emblem of the connexion of the Jewish *High Priest* with the Messiah. The shape of the ark itself may have been appointed, like its name, in reference to that earlier fabric in which the Church, and with it the religion of the promise, was transmitted from the ante-diluvian world, to spread through the future. It has been already observed, that the plan of the tabernacle, and all that it contained, was totally unmingled with human invention. "Thou shalt rear up the tabernacle according to the fashion thereof, that was showed thee in the mount." The whole construction and its contents were essential to the typical purpose ; and all was, therefore, made "according to the pattern" commanded by HIM who had ordained the



realization of the type; that type itself being equivalent at once to a pledge and a prophecy.

The value of those topics is not merely in their curiosity ; in the learning which has been so long devoted to them ; or in their illustration of the habits and history of the most extraordinary of all nations.—But, in their evidence of unintermitting *design*, of a providential plan, beginning at the earliest ages, and continued, without the breaking of a link, to the last. The most important of all the results of Scriptural investigation must be, its result upon the individual mind, in its establishment of a personal conviction that the Scriptures are *true* ; that their doctrines are the *actual dictates* of Heaven ; and that, in listening to them as the hourly guides of life, and receiving their warnings and promises as facts undeniable, we are acting upon grounds of the most perfect security. This conviction (miracle apart,) cannot be obtained without the exertion of our reason ; and even the influence of the Divine Spirit is undoubtedly much more frequently applied to the clearance of our reason, than to the relief of its labours,—much more to the enabling it to exert its natural powers freely in the discovery of truths, for which such force and variety of evidence is prepared, than to supplying it with unsought conclusions, and warming the heart without enlightening the understanding. In the mutual relation of the two sanctuaries, we see a work

whose extent, fulness, and accuracy, compel us to acknowledge it as the work, not of man, but of God,—a bond established between the two inspired religions: one commencing with the dawn of civilization in the world after the deluge; and the other extending to the last hours which shall pass over the head of mankind: Judæism, a duration of nearly 2000 years; Christianity, already nearly as old, and destined to a career, of which the limit is beyond knowledge. In the ark of the covenant, we see another bond, established still farther back, reaching from the fall to the consummation of Judæism; and this bond not a mere invention of human ingenuity, attempting to embody traditions in things; but declared, point by point, to be “*after the pattern*” shown by God. And this emblem not a vague and general representation; but a direct, exact, and minute compilation of parts, all expressive, and all combining in the expression of one object,—the restoration of mankind by the death of the Redeemer. It is to be remarked, also, that this emblem was framed nearly 1500 years before the event; that, in all probability, its meaning was as little comprehended by the Jews in general, as its fabric was seen; that the first rational attempt ever made to explain it, was made by the Great Apostle; and that being thus “hard to be understood,” as it must have been, by the Jew, and perfectly comprehensible as it is by the Christian,

it was chiefly intended to invigorate *our* conviction, through the medium of our knowledge.

It is true that, from the moment of the original promise to Adam, Paradise was virtually re-opened. The declaration that the promised Son should bruise the serpent's head, was an immediate revoking of that death, which would otherwise have been instant and final. Thenceforth, if man perished, it must be by his refusal of the terms of immortality. The spiritual Paradise was freely entered by all who came purified by that supreme sacrifice, through whose efficacy, remote as its actual completion was, they solicited reconciliation. But the emblem of the closed Paradise was retained, —for an evidence of the ruin, the ark of the testimony ;—and, for an equal evidence of the reconciliation, the ark of the covenant. With the actual sacrifice of the Messiah, the use of the emblem, in both prospect and retrospect, was at an end.

## CHAPTER XXVIII.

### THE SABBATH.

THE renewal of the Sabbath was one of the leading ordinances of the Mosaic law. The opinions on the subject, widely as they diverge, are reducible to the three questions:—Was the Sabbath observed previously to the time of Moses? Was the day then appointed the literal seventh day in succession from the day hallowed in Paradise? Was the change adopted in the Apostolic age binding upon posterity?—Abandoning the cumbersome and contradictory references to human judgment<sup>1</sup>, we must look for the only safe solution to the Scriptures.

The first declaration to Moses involving the appointment of a Sabbath, is simply a promise of the manna:—"Behold, I will rain bread from heaven for you. And it shall come to pass, that on the sixth day, they shall prepare that which they bring in; and it shall be *twice as much as*

<sup>1</sup> Heylin, &c.

they gather daily<sup>1</sup>." Here the communication ends. But Moses draws from it the direct conclusion, that the day which follows the double portion is intended for a period in which the people shall rest from their occupation; that occupation, in the Wilderness, being naturally confined to the preparation of food. On the sixth day, the rulers of the tribes announce that a double quantity of manna has fallen; and he at once declares that to-morrow is the rest of *the Holy Sabbath* to the Lord." The allusion here is not merely to a day of rest in general, but to a peculiar day of rest, the *Lord's Sabbath*, which also receives the same epithet of *holy*, given to it at the close of creation—"And God blessed the seventh day, and *sanctified it*<sup>2</sup>," declared it holy, separated to his especial honour. No further explanation of the "Rest" is given, than that "it is the sabbath of the Lord;" a name which seems to have been equivalent to all explanation. That the sabbath was not spoken of by name in the long interval from its appointment in paradise, is no evidence that it was not observed. Thus, we have no mention of sacrifice from Abel to Noah, a period of 2000 years; yet we cannot doubt, that the rite was constantly sustained in the patriarchal family, for we *know* that without it they could not have either lived or "died in

<sup>1</sup> Exod. xvi. 4, 5.<sup>2</sup> Gen. ii. 3.

faith<sup>1</sup>.” Circumcision equally sinks out of history for 430 years, from Abraham to Moses, (excepting the single transaction of the Shechemites,) yet Moses perfectly understands the Divine rebuke, in the instance of his son, and obeys. But, to the maintenance of the sabbath there were frequent allusions in the intermediate time. The division into *sevens* of days is used in the declaration of the coming deluge. “Yet seven days and I will cause it to rain.” It marks the several times of sending out the raven and the dove. Even so far down as the exile of Jacob, and in the family of the Chaldee Laban, we find a *week* the recognized period of Leah’s marriage festival, “Fulfil her *week*.” The week was also adopted by the chief nations branching from the line of Shem. On no other discoverable ground, was seven the number of perfection, the sign of a thing complete, the great sacrificial number. Job’s sacrifice was “*seven*

<sup>1</sup> In the first demand of Moses to Pharaoh, the mention of sacrifice is made, as of a thing perfectly understood. He requires that the people shall be suffered to go into the desert, to *sacrifice*. The rite had as evidently been intermitted during the bondage, and perhaps during the entire residence in Egypt, through fear of offending the Egyptians. For when Pharaoh, after the plague of flies, bids them “Go sacrifice in the land,” Moses refuses, on the ground that in sacrificing “the abomination of the Egyptians, they might be stoned.”—(Exod. viii. 26.) Yet, with that intermission of probably 215 years, the idea of sacrifice is exactly retained; Moses demands the Israelite cattle for “sacrifices and *burnt-offerings*.”—(Exod. x. 25.)

bullocks and *seven* rams." Balaam's was of the same number of both on *seven* altars ; and the example of the great Mesopotamian diviner, whose fame had spread through the East, and who was summoned to aid the councils of kings, or avert the fall of nations, shows the high repute of the custom in his day. In the absence of all facts to the contrary, those circumstances, on every rational principle of evidence, are decisive. The original sabbath must have been observed by the patriarchal world.

The question of the restoration of the literal day is to be answered by a similar appeal to circumstances. That the observance of a seventh day had been intermitted, (probably during the whole period of the bondage,) is evident from its *renewal*, and from the formality and distinction of that renewal. But if dependence on one contingency implies another, the first Mosaic sabbath must have been totally *contingent*. The appointment of the particular day was palpably regulated by one of the most accidental circumstances conceivable ; the time at which the miscellaneous multitude of the Israelites had exhausted the provisions brought with them from Egypt. They clamoured, that they had been betrayed into the wilderness to die of famine. In answer, meat and bread were promised. And the seventh day from the giving of that bread, is appointed as the day " holy to the Lord." Having no declaration of Scripture to the

contrary, and being thus committed to human reason on the subject, it has a right to be assumed as an authority ; and its conclusion clearly is, that the *day*, in this instance, was wholly *contingent* ; and that the object was entirely gained by the separation of one day in seven.

Even in the delay of the sabbath to this period, we, possibly, may trace the hand of Providence. If the sabbath had been appointed, while the people still enjoyed their Egyptian food ; the ordinance might have fallen with ineffectual weight on so fickle and thoughtless a race. But when, in the immediate terror of famine, they were compelled to feel their dependence on Divine aid ; the command, connected with the exigent supply of bread, must have assumed a much more impressive aspect, and been received as coming from the Divine authority.

The *contingent* nature of the first Mosaic sabbath goes far to decide the question of the Lord's day. If, in the former instance, a compound of human wants and human offences, hunger and murmurings, were thought fit by Divine wisdom to fix the Jewish sabbath ; on how much higher grounds has the same wisdom taught us to fix the Christian day of rest.—The first day of the week ; distinguished by the most momentous displays of beneficence and power, the resurrection, the successive appearances of the risen Christ, and the Pentecost ! That the change of the day existed



from the Apostolic age, we have the evidence of Scripture ; that the change was by Divine wisdom, we have the authority of Christ, in the declaration, that whatever the apostles “ bound or loosed,” should be sanctioned in Heaven.

The extraordinary share occupied by the sabbath in the Jewish ritual—its prominence in the Ten Commandments—its memorials in the sabbatical year, in the jubilee, in the *weeks* of the passover, of the pentecost, and of the feast of tabernacles—the perpetual admonitions to keep it sacred, and the fearful and peculiar judgments which avowedly avenged its violation—naturally suggest the inquiry, why means so powerful should have been adopted for preserving its existence in the national mind.

The value of a sabbath is fully intelligible, as a day of relaxation, in a world where man must earn his bread by the sweat of his brow ; and as a day on which, withdrawing from the anxieties and labours of that world, he may give his thoughts to higher things. But the declared ground of its establishment, in the great summary of the law from Heaven, is that “ In six days God created the heavens and earth, resting on the seventh day.” The seventh day was given to rest, because the six preceding had been given to *the work of creation*. Thus the chief purpose of the sabbath, by the Divine declaration, is to impress the fact for ever on the

memory of man, that the universe is the work of the Deity.

In this purpose we see only a new proof of the far-reaching wisdom of Heaven. For, on this fact alone is founded the whole morality of man. One of the oldest questions of the human understanding is, “*Why are we bound to obey the Divine will?*” Some authorities have held fear of the Divine power to be the legitimate principle. But fear is an ignoble passion, acting by ignoble means, evasion, distrust, and hatred; enfeebling the energies of the agent in proportion to its force, and, after all, capable of being thrown off, without a stain on duty, gratitude, or virtue. Others have held the Divine rewards as the sufficient motive<sup>1</sup>. Yet, the hope of reward, *alone*, is selfish, extinguishing all magnanimity, and is equally capable of being abandoned without a crime.

But the fact of creation establishes a claim, irresistible by every higher feeling of the heart. In human life, who has a right to call upon us for the full use of our means, equal to the man

<sup>1</sup> It is surprising to find even Bishop Butler holding, that our regard for virtue involves a view of its *rewards*: as if there could be no *spontaneous* desire to benefit mankind, or honour the Deity; or as if those feelings were not daily evinced in the mind of every man of virtue; or as if the sense of the virtue were not actually diminished in exact proportion to the *sense of the reward*.

who may have originally given us those means? Against whom would the voice of mankind be more instinctively raised than against the denier of such an obligation? And it is thus that we stand with the Creator. What claim to the service of our powers can equal His, by whom those powers were spontaneously given? What allegiance of heart or understanding are we entitled to withdraw from the great Benefactor by whom both were endowed? What labour of the intellect, what tribute of the wealth, what obedience of the will, what sacred devotement of the affections, are we justified in refusing to the all-giving Source of the mind, the opulence, the volition, and the feelings? On this principle, no service *can* be withheld. The deepest requisition of obedience must be complied with, on the mere impulse of our nature. Having received all, we must be ready, on common principles, to repay all; unless we are prepared for the charge of acknowledged ingratitude; which is but another name for an acknowledged failure in the sense of dignity, justice, and honour; which is but another name for the refusal of a *right*—a refusal, in itself, constituting a *crime*. And this bond, thus clinging to every limb of the moral frame, and utterly inextricable, is yet so far from being a restraint on the nobler impulses of our nature, that it is a chief source of their healthful growth and legitimate vigour; rendering duty the

prime mover of all our actions, and sustaining and elevating its efforts by the ardour of generous affection ; extinguishing all selfishness, the bane of all magnanimity ; purifying hope and fear by love ; and constringing and modelling the whole human nature into the closest resemblance to the Divine.

The permanency of the Lord's day is a direct consequence. If the practice of honouring a Sabbath be essentially connected with the principle of honouring the Creator ;—and if that principle be the foundation of all religious obedience, and with it, of all human happiness,—what ground have we to doubt, that the principle and the practice were intended to live and die together ? that the solemn and grateful observance of a seventh day, in distinct acknowledgment of the Creator, was Divinely appointed, and that it was appointed to last as long as mankind<sup>1</sup> ?

<sup>1</sup> It has been rashly objected, that the Ten Commandments, however valuable as foundations of general morality, were exclusively addressed to the Jews ; alleging for this, the exclusiveness of the command to honour our parents, on a promise of long life in *Palestine*. Yet, it is remarkable, that, as if for the express purpose of overthrowing this cavil, St. Paul re-states this command, as incumbent on the Christian Church in all ages ; expressly adding, for its increased *sanction*, that it was the “ *first commandment with promise.*”

## CHAPTER XXIX.

### THE MOSAIC WORSHIP.

THE Mosaic ordinances for the dignity of the Divine worship, were on the stateliest scale. The whole tribe of Levi was appointed to the especial service of religion. In the wilderness, the three chief Levite families, the Kohathites, the Gershonites, and the Merarites, encamped on three sides of the sanctuary; the tents of Moses and Aaron were on the fourth. In the days of the Temple, four and twenty thousand of the tribe were appointed to its attendance; divided into four and twenty courses, of a thousand for each week. When David "made Solomon his son king of Israel," a numbering of the Levites gave 38,000 for the entire number of males from thirty to fifty years of age: the legal period of service<sup>1</sup>.

<sup>1</sup> Numb. iv. 3. The age in the general instances was twenty-five. But the Kohathites, who carried the vessels, &c. of the sanctuary, must be thirty years old, as being entrusted with a more responsible duty. Such was the minute and accurate care exhibited in every part of the Divine code. The numbering by David began with thirty.

The remaining 14000 were divided into three classes: 6000 officers and judges, who, in their districts, interpreted the Law, and kept those public records and genealogies, so important to all the operations of Jewish public life; another class of 4000, employed as attendants at the gates, and general guards and regulators within the Temple; and a third, of 4000, as minstrels and singers. But no *Levite* was, probably, subjected to any degrading occupation. The menial work, the hewing of wood and drawing of water, was done by the Nethinims; a race descended of the Gibeonites, who had imposed on Joshua; and some remnant of the Canaanite prisoners<sup>1</sup>.

That fine part of devotion which speaks "in psalms and hymns, and spiritual songs," and which is so feebly sustained, if not so criminally neglected, in the service of later times, in the rude discordancy of the parish church, and the frigid and penurious formality of the cathedral; occupied a pre-eminent place in the service of the Temple. The 25th chapter of the 1st Book of Chronicles gives a list of twenty-four families, amounting to 288 persons, expressly appointed to instruct the choirs and lead the performances. The Psalms of David, and the 1500 Songs of Solomon, attest the sacred interest with which the most gifted of the national sovereigns cultivated this admirable source of elevation of heart.

<sup>1</sup> 1 Kings ix 20, 21.

The multitude and perfection of its minstrelsy formed the prominent human distinction of the Temple. Paganism, too, had its pomps ; and its gods were hailed with flute and lyre. But the world never heard a rival to the burst of transcendant harmony, that rose from the minstrels of the Mountain of the Lord—a thunder of triumphant adoration. It is observable that this superb service was the effect of neither human love of pomp, nor royal gratitude ; it was *enjoined* by the Divine ordinance, declared “ by Gad, the king’s seer, and Nathan the prophet ; for so was the *commandment of the Lord*, by his prophets<sup>1</sup>.”

The Levites had not received any portion of the land, in the general division of Canaan. In place of this natural claim, they received the tenths of the whole produce of the soil—corn, fruits, and cattle. Of those tenths, they again gave a tenth to the maintenance of the priesthood, also Levites, but who must be of the blood of Aaron. In addition to this maintenance, the Levites were supplied with dwellings : forty-eight cities, variously distributed through the territory, were given for their express habitation ; with suburbs and gardens, extending to a thousand cubits, or somewhat more than 1500 feet, round the city walls ; and an open space of 2000 cubits more, for fields, and devoted to recreation and pasturage. Of those cities, thirteen belonged to the priesthood.

<sup>1</sup> 2 Chron. xxix. 25.

The High Priest, in the theocracy, chiefly held the sovereign rank. In the days of the kings, he was next to the monarch; his appointment was for life, and it gave him supreme authority in all things belonging to religion<sup>1</sup>.

Thus ample, protected, and avowed, was the provision established by the actual personal government of God for the maintenance of his knowledge and worship among mankind. Yet, if we are to take the *acts* of the Divine Being for our best guidance in human interests; for the truest conformity to the nature of things; for the most direct means to their end; or even for the simple indications of the Divine will;—we must find the most formidable difficulties in every attempt to reconcile human interests or His will with the ideas prevalent in later times. On this subject, the argument is not with those who are equally contemptuous of the authority of Scripture, and indifferent to the being of a God. But to all who are capable of receiving conviction, the Mosaic

<sup>1</sup> The High Priest must be of the line of Eleazer, the eldest son of Aaron. On the death of Eli, the succession was changed, in punishment of the vices of his descendants, to the line of Thamar, the second son of Aaron. In the time of Solomon, it was restored to the elder branch. After the captivity, the Jews saw one High Priest of the family of Eleazer, and but one—Joshua. Evil days were coming, when the whole Jewish polity was to perish; and the cessation of the priesthood in the elder branch of Aaron was the first, and the sure, sign.



ordinances supply that conviction with the fullest authority.

If it be said, that a *national* religion is inconsistent with human rights or Divine justice,—We see in Judæism a *national* religion, appointed by the express command of the Deity.

If, that an *establishment* is the worst form of sustaining a religion,—We see an *establishment* of the most systematic and solid order, the Divinely appointed instrument of sustaining a religion.

If, that high rank, and connexion with public councils, are unsuitable to the existence and duties of a clergy,—We see the High Priest frequently appointed even as the virtual sovereign, in the purest times of Judæa, and always sustaining a distinguished rank in the government.

If, that a Church can, consistently, be regarded only as a dependent on the State, and be supported only by a public salary, or the contributions of its peculiar worshippers,—We see the Church of Judæa living on its original property, a property also solemnly fixed by law, and wholly independent of the fluctuating liberality of either the state or the people.

If, that all distinctions of rank in a clergy are mere matters of vanity, and hazardous to its character,—We see, in the Jewish Church no less than *four ranks*, kept asunder by even wider distinctions than any that have followed them:—The High Priest, the descendant of a peculiar

branch of a peculiar family ; the Chief Priest, or head of his class ; the Priest ; and the general Levite tribe, also a sacred order, but permanently excluded from all higher offices ; the posterity of Aaron alone being capable of the priesthood.

If, that, to render a Church virtuous, the only expedient is, to keep it poor,—We see the endowment of the Jewish Church of a very ample order. To the tribe of Levi was allotted, in the first instance, the *tenth* of the whole produce of the land. And this amounted, individually, to a much greater portion than by the original allotment of any other tribe ; from both, their receiving a tenth instead of a twelfth, and their being one of the smallest of the tribes. The actual priesthood were still more amply provided for. Besides the tenth of the whole income of the Levites, they received the *first fruits* of the harvest ; the *first clip* of wool in the sheep-shearing ; a portion of the *sin-offerings and peace-offerings* of the Temple ; and the *skin* of every animal sacrificed ; which, on some occasions, amounted to a great number. They had also the *first-fruits* of all trees ; a portion of the *spoil* made in war ; the *first-born* of all clean animals, after their blood was poured upon the altar ; a fine on the *first-born* of every unclean animal ; and five shekels, as a redemption fine, for *every first-born* child. And this was their exclusive property, and unconnected with any expenditure on the Temple, its services, or

support ; provision for which was made in the half-shekel, contributed yearly by every Jew, from twenty years upward.

The evident object of the system was, to fix, as a principle, the maintenance of a clergy, in that state of sufficiency, and even more than sufficiency, which would relieve them from every feeling, in the shape of anxiety for their support ; and give them full leisure for the pursuit of study however absorbing, laborious, or costly ; means of dispensing the charities, decent hospitalities, and active kindnesses, that make a clergy lights and helps in their sphere ; and contributing to those noble institutes and monuments of national piety, in which the opulence and genius of man consecrate themselves to the honour of Heaven. When we see the European operation of this principle, even encumbered and perverted as it was by the errors native to monkish times ; when we see the energy with which it broke through the selfishness of the cloister, the ignorance of darkened ages, and the barbarian convulsions of government and society where all was the dominion of the sword ; the majestic architecture which it spread over every country of Europe, the boast and shame of later days ; the vast libraries in which it guarded the genius of the dead masters of the intellectual world for the unborn generations ; the treasure of antiquities, gems, medals, manuscripts, those accumulated tests and evidences of wisdom, learn-

ing, polity, and virtue, of which the world outside knew no more than of the dust under their feet, and which must have perished but for the magnificent industry of this explorer of the grave ;—the matchless sculpture and painting, of which it created, if not the mind, the age ; the cathedral music, the origin, and among the richest productions, of that art which at once solaces, and uplifts the heart of man, the noblest auxiliary to the offering of the spirit to heaven ;—the still more hallowed labours of religious charity, the great receptacles for the poor, the hospitals, their houses of rest and reception by the way side for the traveller, in the disturbed times of the world ; the missions to every part of the earth, sustained with more than kingly munificence, and almost more than human zeal, perseverance, and intrepidity ;—and when we contrast that day with ours, the labours of the day of generous ignorance with the labours of the day of parsimony and illumination ; the achievements of magnanimous superstition with the abortions of philosophy ; the cathedral with the conventicle ; we may be entitled to feel some doubt, whether the opulence of a national Church is the impoverishment of a people—whether such a Church would not be the safest, purest, and most effectual source through which civilization could be poured upon a people ;—or whether the same feeling which would reduce a Church to the narrowest limits of subsist-

ence, would not be jealous of the tree that gathered the dew on its branches for the ground beneath ; or level the mountain that first caught the glories of the sunrise, and poured down the stream, pure and perpetual, from heaven.

To the habitual declamatory objections—that tithe is, by its nature, unfit for the maintenance of a clergy ; and is, above all, prejudicial to agriculture ; or that, to compel those to contribute to a National Church, who may feel indifferent to its worship, is a palpable injustice ; the Mosaic ordinances furnish the cogent answer—that tithe was the original measure, and continued instrument, of Jewish Church revenue : and that this measure was appointed in a country the most exclusively agricultural, and the most prosperously cultivated, ever known. As to tribute, no exception to the half-shekel (even in its obnoxious shape of a poll-tax) was receivable from any Jew of the legal age, on any ground, and more especially on a ground so certain to be adopted by fraud, indifference, parsimony, or revolt, as a doubt of the fitness of the Temple for a place of worship, or of the fitness of having any religion at all.

The question is, not of the applicability of the Mosaic Church laws to later times, but of their natural justice. The Church of England derives none of her rights, and but few of her forms, from the Church of Judæa ; but her principles are the same. While the principles of the Esta-

blishment are impugned, as totally irreconcilable with natural rights, offensive to enlightened reason, and hostile to public prosperity ; that Establishment, perhaps more careless of the result for herself, than for her country ; is entitled to turn to the highest conceivable authority, and point to her principles, one by one, illustrated in the national and religious code written by the finger, not of man, but of God ! What reply can the *honest* doubter have, but to throw himself on his knees, and thank that God that his doubts had not risen into the impiety of action.

Those rights and rules were the express ordinances of Him who knows all the sources of public vigour ; the supreme Master of all the instruments of individual virtue ; incapable of infringing on the claim of any of his creatures ; and whose declared purpose it was, to make the Jewish nation the happiest, the purest, the wisest, and, as the sum and security of all, the most religious, people of mankind.

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The necessity of a Religious Establishment, wherever religion is to be sustained in its highest degree of vigour, and public utility, is a matter of demonstration.

Religion, of all the gifts of God to man, holds the first place ; from its importance to society, as the source of obedience, and to the individual, as the only solid ground of happiness on earth, and hope in the future world.

But religion is not born with man ; it is not an instinct. Nor is it a necessity of his nature ; it is not an appetite. Man is not urged to it, as to food : it must therefore be brought to him.

And as the object of all government is the provision of good for the nation ; the especial care of the state must be exercised for the provision of the greatest good.—There must be a **NATIONAL RELIGION**.

But the teaching of this religion must not be left to unfixed and irresponsible individuals ; who may be ignorant, or disloyal, who probably will be insubordinate, and who, having no assured subsistence by their office, will naturally abandon it on the first inducement of profit, caprice, or indolence. Its teachers must therefore be settled, responsible, and subordinate. But settlement implies a regular profession ; responsibility, known rules ; and subordination, a distinction of ranks.—There must be a **NATIONAL CLERGY**.

But the principles of the religion must not be left to the innovations of individuals ; who may be actuated by the heated passions, temporary views, sectarian jealousies, or hazardous ambitions, which make so large a share of human character. They must be gravely formed, authoritatively delivered, and publicly known.—There must be a **NATIONAL LITURGY**.

But the personal subsistence of the Clergy must not be left to the good-will of either government or people. In the former instance, the first state emergency extinguishes the Church ; in the latter, the Clergy must sink from canvassers for employment into mendicants for food. The living generation may cling to their duties ; but no man will educate his son for a profession, which the next popular breath may scatter into dust. The succession of a learned, faithful, and manly clergy, will be totally cut off : and the land will be left to angry intrigue or degraded ignorance ; to popular sycophants, training for popular firebrands ; to gloomy infidelity, and domineering sowers of sedition. England has already laid up for herself a formidable treasure of experience. If she uncover the grave again, what can she see there, but the ashes of her royalty and the blood of her people !—There must be a **RELIGIOUS ESTABLISHMENT**, if there is to be a Constitution.

## CHAPTER XXX.

### MIRACLES.

MIRACLE and Prophecy are the two chief testimonials to the divine origin of a Revelation ; the one being a proof that supernatural power is concerned in its existence ; the other, that it is the dictate of supernatural wisdom. The Revelation may exist without either, but they importantly aid its progress. They are the wings, that at once attest its descent from a higher sphere, and bear it with victorious rapidity through the world. The peculiarity, abruptness, and force, of miracles, have made our Divines generally regard them as solitary interpositions of the Deity. It is more probable that they have a system ; distinct, of course, from the visible order of nature, but possessing principles and an order of its own. One striking feature is, their constant connection with Revelation, and the extreme infrequency of their employment, as connected with any other work of Providence. But, with Revelation the connection is so strong, that it actually moulds them into four distinct general forms.



In the patriarchal ages : where the existence of God was the chief purpose of revelation, miracles were few ; perhaps, because the natural evidences were many ; but those few were direct displays of the Divine wrath or protection, and all emanated from the Deity alone.

In the birth of Judæism : where the purpose of Revelation was the establishment of an extensive code, the erection of a government, and the general formation of a people ; Miracle assumed a new shape, of proportionate activity and magnitude. It was no longer a solitary act, or an act of Deity alone ; it was an instrument given to the hand of man, and co-extensive with every necessity of human government ; it was the guide of Israel in council, his leader on the march, his champion in the field ; it spread through every event, and met every exigency ; it pronounced law, promised reward, and inflicted punishment. Even in those things which seem to be most peculiarly within the province of human exertion, food and clothing, Miracle was the sole agent. Its ancient character of rareness, abruptness, and solemnity, was totally changed. The sustenance of the Israelites in the desert was a daily succession of miracles, or rather, one vast, continuous miracle of forty years.

In the birth of Christianity : where the purpose of Revelation was the establishment of the mission of Christ, Miracle assumed a new form. After a

cessation, of nearly six hundred years, it appeared in the person of an individual ; an exclusive possession, but of the most extraordinary extent and energy ; not delegated, as in the instance of Moses, but inherent ; not reserved for great public objects alone, but capable of incessant action, and employed in thousands of instances of the most simple and private life ; altogether exceeding the earlier forms of miracle, by its various application and comprehensiveness of power ; not merely commanding the elements, healing disease, and reanimating the dead, but exceeding those works of Moses and the prophets by influences of which they appear to have formed no conception, the control of the human heart and of the spiritual world ; and even developing the attribute which is held to belong exclusively to Deity—creation.

A fourth change in the purpose of Revelation was to come ; and Miracle will be seen instantly and astonishingly adapting itself to the change. The personal mission of the Messiah had been established ; the purpose now was the propagation of his doctrines. The only appeal of doctrine must be to the heart and understanding ; but, for this, the mere display of power, as chiefly appealing to the senses, would be an inadequate instrument. Miracle accordingly, now laid aside almost its whole display of power, and developed itself in the communication of gifts. Its agency

hitherto had been chiefly external : Moses smote the rock ; or summoned the waves to roll over the Egyptians ; Christ commanded the tempest to be calm ; or the evil spirit to come forth. But Miracle was now chiefly *internal* ; an action on the individual, giving him the instant power of speaking and interpreting various languages, of explaining the mysteries of Scripture, of distinguishing the fictitious inspiration from the true, of preaching or prophesying with peculiar impressiveness ; and all those extraordinary qualities generally accompanied with the not less extraordinary change of the habits and nature of the mind—constitutional timidity suddenly transmuted into inflexible fortitude ; rashness into vigorous prudence ; the weakness and inaptitude of peasant intelligence into fearless dignity ; bitter hatred and reckless cruelty into the habitual softness of heart, that was all things to all men ; bigotry into the zeal of human happiness, that laboured for the love of human kind ; unbelief into the solemn and triumphant faith that longed only to spend and be spent for the honour of religion ; Paul the persecutor changed into Paul the Apostle.

Those views are important to higher objects than curiosity ; for an agency shown to be at once thus extensive and thus plastic, is clearly not an agency within the competence of man. A single wonder, or even a succession of wonders of the same order, might, by possibility, be contrived by

human skill acting on an age of ignorance ; but a succession of wonders, acting with equally fine adaptation on the age of ignorance, of partial light, and of general illumination ; in primitive Palestine, in Egypt in the days of the Pharaohs, and in Greece, Italy, and Asia Minor, in the days of their most fastidious refinement, most high-toned scepticism, and most general cultivation of philosophy, is an instrument altogether above the tampering of man ; it has nothing human in its boundless vigour and variety, and as little human in its perfect submissiveness to the Divine purpose. If it consist of deviations from the order of nature, it is, like the deviations of the planetary system, not less provided for by the laws of nature ; a noble anomaly, which, first startling our ignorance, finally rewards our science with a still higher insight into the Divine wisdom. It refers to Revelation, as the order of nature refers to natural religion. The order establishes the existence of a God ; the deviation establishes his will ; Miracle is the *τα φυσικα* of Revelation.

Our theologians, in general, have too readily satisfied themselves with their answers to Hume's well-known proposition, that " It is contrary to experience that miracle should be true ; but not contrary to experience, that testimony should be

false." There is a palpable insufficiency in Paley's answer, "that an ambiguity exists, in the use of the word *contrary*." And that "the narrative of a fact is contrary to experience only when the fact is related to have existed at a time and place, at which we, being present, did not perceive it to exist." Hume is here answered, by being misconceived. His meaning is not, contrary to personal experience of a particular fact, but to general experience of the *course of nature*. Campbell turns to the latter clause of the proposition, and justly insists on the force of testimony. But he falls into the extraordinary error, that "testimony has a natural influence on belief, *antecedent* to experience." He even grounds upon this principle the common fact, that the young are more credulous than the mature. But a principle of this unreasoning order would be an *instinct*, and its result would be the monstrous paradox, that the more feeble and ignorant the mind, the more firm and vigorous the faith. Campbell's misconception arose from confounding the two objects of experience, persons, and things. Our belief in testimony belongs, not to things, but to persons.—We have experience of the narrator of a singular fact; this experience has *satisfied* us that he is intelligent, and incapable of deception; and *therefore* we receive his narrative as perfectly true. And this ground of belief is so habitual, that the man may be considered peculiarly unfortunate in his

intercourse with society, who does not know several individuals on whom he would rely as much as on the testimony of his own senses. There are individuals whom we should believe, if they told us that they had seen an angel descending from heaven, or a demon starting up out of the earth. The incredulity of age arises also from experience ; it has been oftener deceived.

Hume's actual paralogism lies in his confounding the *lowest degree* of testimony with *the highest*, and drawing his conclusion as if the lowest alone existed. "It is not contrary to experience that testimony should be false." Doubtless, it is not contrary to experience, that common rumour should be false. But it is *totally contrary*, that the testimony of individuals in whom we have experienced the most unimpeachable virtue, honour, and understanding, should be any thing but strictly true. Having equally clear evidence that the Evangelists possessed those qualities in the most remarkable degree : upon that evidence we are fully justified, by the common principles of human conduct, in receiving their statements of the miracles as facts beyond all question. The truth is, that if we were to be solely dependent on the evidence of our own senses, society could not go on for a day. Testimony is the Divine expedient for extending the narrowness of individual observation, by adding to it the observation of all. It is the addition of the senses of other men to our

own ; and, in its higher states, with an authority practically equal to that of our own. On testimony we continually repose for the most important concerns of our lives.

Still, the force of testimony, though obviously unresisted and irresistible in actual life, does not seem to be sufficiently impressed on our later theologians. Thus we find it declared (*Hulsean Lectures*) that no possible force of testimony can establish the fact of a miracle by an evil spirit. Yet, why not ? unless it be an impossibility. But where is the impossibility ? When our Lord is reproached with casting out devils through Beelzebub, he does not repel the charge by asserting the *impossibility*, which would be the most direct of all answers. He replies by asking, whether the evil spirit would work miracles to defeat himself ?

When the demons took possession of the human body, was not this a contradiction of the course of nature, a miracle ? When they passed from the human body into the brute, was not this a miracle, though only by sufferance ? When Satan bore our Lord from the desert, and placed him on the pinnacle of the temple<sup>1</sup>, was not this a miracle, which,

<sup>1</sup> It has been said, that the view of the kingdoms of the world, given by Satan from the pinnacle of the temple, was not a miracle, *because* the *οικουμένη* may mean only Palestine, and thus he showed only “ the four Tetrarchies.” But, besides the

whether the purpose or the person is considered, exhibited the most extraordinary degree of power? Thus, there can be no doubt that the evil spirit has worked miracles. The only limit that we can be authorized from Scripture in assigning to them, is, that they cannot be wrought but by Divine sufferance, and that they cannot be wrought but with an intention of evil <sup>1</sup>.

fantasy of this circumscription of the power of a being who is declared to be the "God of this world," and who was then using "the glory of all his kingdoms" as a temptation; what human eye could see the extent, even of Palestine, from the temple, without a miracle? The question of more or less, in works palpably above man, is inadmissible.

<sup>1</sup> Douglas, Criterion. Campbell, Dissertation. Paley's Evidences. Profess. Vince, Sermon on Credibility, &c. &c. Bp. Gleig, Notes to Stackhouse; his observations, however, chiefly refer to miracles wrought by the application of *natural materials*, of which we have scarcely an instance, except, perhaps, in the cure of Hezekiah. The touching of the blind man's eyes *with clay*, was evidently a mere form.



## CHAPTER XXXI.

### THE EGYPTIAN ENCHANTERS.

THE curious question, whether Pharaoh's magicians worked real miracles ; a question as old as Justin Martyr, if not as old as controversy itself, is still the subject of dispute. Farmer<sup>1</sup> holds, and justly, that their arts were merely human. But his argument against their being devices of the evil spirit, that there is no reason why Satan should have stopped at the third plague, more than at the first, is palpably insufficient ; for, as all the power of the evil spirit must be *permissive*, it might have been the Divine will to interfere at that point. The majority of Divines also hold that the enchantments were matters of human dexterity ; but, on the principle, that the evil spirit *cannot* work miracles ; a principle palpably contradicted (as has been already observed,) in the instance of the demoniacs, the temptation,

<sup>1</sup> Dissertation on Miracles. Sect. 1.

and the Pythoness, from whom the prophetic spirit was expelled by the Apostle<sup>1</sup>.

But, the secure answer is to be found only in an authority, not always remembered in the war of argument, the plain narrative. Moses comes to Pharaoh, declaring himself the bearer of the command of "Jehovah, God of Israel," that he should "let his people go." No man in his senses would stand upon his own determination, against the declared command of a God ; especially in Egypt, where superstition had arrived at its height. Pharaoh, therefore, does not deny the fitness of obedience to a command of Deity, but he denies the existence of "Jehovah," (the *sacred name*, which was, probably, not known beyond the Israelite border.) "And Pharaoh said, who is Jehovah ? that I should obey his voice. I know not Jehovah, neither will I let Israel go." Moses then declares the more usual name, "the God of the Hebrews." But the result of the demand once repelled, is only the immediate adoption of severer measures towards the Israelites.

After an interval of national suffering, Moses and Aaron are sent to repeat the command. The king now,\* without questioning the name of their God, fixes his refusal upon their want of authority to ask in that name, and requires a miracle as the evidence. A miracle is wrought ; Aaron throws

<sup>1</sup> Acts xvi. 16.

down his staff, and it becomes a serpent. Still the king refuses, and attempts to justify his refusal, on the plea, that the act does not necessarily prove a Divine interposition. And to show that it may be the work of mere man, he summons his magicians ; who effect a work, which to all appearance, is the same. Aaron's serpent then swallows up all the others. Still, to a strongly prejudiced mind, this might exhibit but a more powerful mastery of the science of enchantments.

The first miracle has been one of mere power, unconnected with suffering. But its denial is followed by one connected with suffering. The waters of the Nile are turned into blood. Still, Pharaoh denies the sufficiency of the evidence, as the work of a God ; for his magicians effect apparently the same miracle, if on a much more incomplete and diminished scale. The trial thus goes no further than the acknowledgment, that Moses is the superior magician ; and Pharaoh still justifies himself in his refusal. The plague of frogs follows. It is met in the same way ; the magicians show, that something like it may be produced by human means. But the disgust of this plague is so strong, that Pharaoh, willing to concede any terms, offers to let the Israelites go, if Moses will entreat his Lord to take away this sickening and repulsive visitation.

But the king's doubt of his credentials is to have no further plausibility. The plague of lice,

or insects, comes. This is an act of *Creation*. The magicians renew their attempts ; fail altogether ; and then make the final acknowledgment, that it is no longer a question of human skill on either side ; that this can be only the work of Deity. Pharaoh, thus stripped of all plea, now fiercely entrenches himself in stubbornness of heart ; and the heavier visitations are let loose against him and his people.

The minute consistency of the narrative is, throughout, admirable. In the first instance of the appeal, the evidence of power is perfectly harmless. In the second, this evidence is of a severer nature,—the pollution of the river and fountains of the land. Yet, as its immediate pressure is obviated by the expedient of digging wells, the king's obstinacy remains untouched. In the third plague, the disgust and abhorrence reject delay ; and, as no expedient against it can be found, Pharaoh stoops at once to the acknowledgment of the Divine commission, and the concession of Israelite freedom. The third plague has left him without even the feeble pleas which sheltered him, in the former instances, from the direct charge of acting irrationally and impiously. He, thenceforth, perseveres, in scorn of all pretext ; and, thenceforth, the more tremendous punishments, the real agonies of sense and soul, begin.

But the whole tenor of the narrative distinctly

argues, that the magicians relied entirely on human skill or science. It is observable that they act only on materials *already before them*,—the water and the frogs<sup>1</sup>. At the third plague, a work implying direct *Creation*, they relinquish the attempt in despair, as totally beyond human powers. From the beginning, they are so far from claiming any higher origin of their own performances, that their attempt to rival those of Moses is, for the express purpose of showing that they do not exceed the faculties of mere man; and, in consequence, have no right to be assumed as credentials of the Deity.

Yet the name of “jugglery and sleight of hand,” usually given to those Egyptian “enchantments,” is inapplicable. Mere dexterity of hand would be too contemptible and commonplace a foundation, for the high authority which the *Magus* exercised in Egypt and all the Asiatic kingdoms. He was the master of all that was known of the secrets of nature in his time,—its

<sup>1</sup> The change of their rods into serpents, or rather, of serpents into their rods, was a common trick of Eastern ingenuity; so common, that we can scarcely conceive the “wise men,”—the royal soothsayers and diviners—to have condescended to exhibit it, except that Aaron had set the example, and that they were desirous of showing how vulgar were his pretensions to miracle. The arts of the serpent-tamers, who seem to have been the lowest tribe of jugglers, are commemorated by Herodotus, Euterpe. Bochart, Hieroz., &c. &c.

rude astronomy, mineralogy, and chemistry ; perhaps, too, acquainted with some vast and vivid uses of natural materials, which have escaped posterity ; the healer of disease ; the interpreter of those moody and significant dreams which, in the convulsed monarchies of the East, must have so often sat upon the pillows of chieftains and kings ; the calculator of those signs and wonders in the stars, which were once so solemnly believed, and on which, even to this hour, we can scarcely look, without some conviction, like the Chaldæan of old, that we see the living characters of Providence, the fiery letters written by the finger of God, to tell nations that they are “ weighed, measured, and undone.”

## CHAPTER XXXII.

### THE MOSAIC MIRACLES.

THE evidence of Miracle is the evidence of the senses, ascertaining a supernatural disturbance of the order of nature<sup>1</sup>. The evidence that a

<sup>1</sup> On this ground Tillotson raises his argument against transubstantiation: "For want of the evidence of our senses, transubstantiation is no miracle: a sign or miracle is always a thing sensible; otherwise it could be no sign. Now, that such a change, as is pretended in this thing, should really be wrought, and yet there should be no sign of it, is very wonderful; but not to sense, for our senses perceive no change. And that a thing should remain, to all appearance, just as it was, hath nothing at all of wonder in it. We wonder, indeed, when we see a strange thing done; but no man wonders when he sees nothing done."—*Sermons*, vol. ii.

This is altogether unanswerable. But the argument would be not the less forcible for being more succinct.—As we discover the order of nature only by our senses, so we can discover the disturbance of that order only by our senses. Miracle is the disturbance of that order. Therefore, miracle must be obvious to our senses, or it has no existence: it is a disturbance which disturbs nothing.

Therefore, transubstantiation, which, to the senses, leaves all things as it found them; while it professes to be the greatest of

miracle comes *from God*, or his instruments, depends upon the connexion of the act with palpable goodness of purpose, or purity of doctrine ; and this proof rises with every addition of copiousness in the use of power, of novelty of resource, variety of purpose, and completeness of execution<sup>1</sup>.

All those characteristics are combined in the chief Mosaic miracles. If a traveller, who had passed through Egypt a year before the Exodus, chanced to traverse the foot of Horeb a year after ; what must be his natural impression, on seeing the Desert, as far as the eye could reach, covered with the tents of Israel ; their temple erected in the midst of the tribes ; their altar smoking up to heaven ; their priesthood, their princes, their magistrates, performing their several functions undisturbed : the whole wearing the calm and regular aspect of a vast free community, prospering without the fear of man. On what human principle could he account for the change ? He had seen them in a state of the most abject bondage. The character of Pharaoh rendered it impossible to believe that he would have remitted

miracles, perpetual and universal, is no miracle at all ; and if no miracle, is nothing.

<sup>1</sup> Leslie's " Four Rules " (" Short Method with the Deists, ") relate chiefly to the general facts of Scripture. As applied to miracles, they are narrow : referring only to those miracles which have been commemorated by public ceremonials,—the Passover, Pentecost, &c.



their bondage on the ground of justice. They were slaves ; and neither king nor nation could be supposed to have given up a property of this order spontaneously. Their liberation could not have been the work of force ; for what could an unarmed multitude, three-fourths of whom were women, infants, and old men, effect against one of the most opulent and martial kingdoms of the earth ? It could not have been by purchase ; for their only wealth was their cattle, and those they had brought with them. Human means being thus inadequate, he would be driven to the necessity of Divine.

The supernatural origin of the plagues has been already argued, from the exactness and variety of their application. The people of Egypt were probably offenders in a much lower degree than their monarch ; as we may learn from the reluctance of the Egyptian midwives to execute the merciless decree for the death of the Hebrew infants. We accordingly find the distinction recognized in the very outpouring of wrath. All was popular terror ; little was popular injury.

But a judgment remained, essential to the security of Israel. Egypt had been awed for the time, but not broken. The natural course of human cupidity would soon lead her to regret the surrender of so large a servile population. Her furious king, whom the immediate torments of the plagues had been scarcely able to restrain, from

hour to hour, would soon forget his fears, and think only of his revenge. The wealth which the departing Israelites had wrung from the people, would be a national stimulant; and, from a concurrence of those motives, Israel would probably have soon seen the Egyptian banners waving against her in the Desert. Where the lingering and encumbered millions of Israel could march, the Egyptian cavalry and chariots could follow; at least, so far as they were provisioned: and this might extend the pursuit over the wilderness; for even the Israelites had been able to carry with them provisions for two months. And this hostility would have been rendered still more hazardous by the circumstances of the people. It was the Divine will that they should remain at Horeb, until the Law was given, and their general polity established. They were thus to be detained a year, almost within sight of Egypt; and an attack by an Egyptian army, during their disjointed and undisciplined state, seconded by the discontents, weariness, and Egyptian recollections of the people, might have been fatal.

Nor are we to suppose such a contingency too unimportant for the Divine care; when we see the original march to Canaan turned from the direct road, for the express reason of avoiding a too sudden collision with the Philistine kingdoms. Miracle is never wasted. The irregular and mixed multitude of the Israelites would, natu-

rally, have been broken by the armed force of Canaan. This result was to be obviated only by marching into the Desert: and it was not until after a year of discipline, that they were hazarded on the borders of the promised land.

But the Divine means are conspicuous for variety. The deliverance from the Egyptian yoke had been effected by a long and strikingly *graduated* course of Divine interposition. The security from the recurrence of bondage was to be the work of a single, stupendous miracle.

The passage of the Red Sea has been affectedly and culpably diluted by foreign scepticism, into an incident so trivial as the passage of an estuary at a low tide. But no astonishment can be too great, as no scorn can be too contemptuous, for the wilful disregard of facts, probabilities, and sound reasoning, in which Infidelity wraps and fetters the understanding. With those reasoners, the primary object of the whole interposition is, the conveyance of the Israelites from the pursuit of their enemy. But this is an obvious error. The primary object was, to work a final conviction on the *mind of Egypt*, that Jchovah was irresistible—a conviction necessarily tending to the abandonment of all attempts against the people under his protection. “I will be honoured upon Pharaoh and all his host: *that the Egyptians may know that I am the Lord*<sup>1</sup>.” This is the original

<sup>1</sup> Exodus xiv. 14.

and leading declaration of the Divine purpose. The actual passage of the sea is but a single feature of an extended plan ; a separate miracle, crowning a design, whose conduct, skill, comprehensiveness of object, and variety of means, place it entirely beyond the invention of man. We are not left to the naked statement of the historian, that a miracle was wrought. The whole extent of the transaction exhibits a character, which alone belongs to the wisdom of Heaven.

Throwing it into the form of a mere question of human sagacity ; What were the requisitions of the problem ? By a *single* act—To disable Egypt from all further aggression—To mark the king by a peculiar vengeance—To inflict this vengeance by means totally distinct from the plagues, and equally distinct from the ordinary agents of Providence in punishing the crimes of kings and people ; war, pestilence, and famine—To render this punishment an unequivocal display of the arm of Heaven—To give the Israelites all the advantages of consummate triumph, without the slightest injury or the slightest extortion—Even to turn their loss of time, and their wandering, into the more rapid and direct means of reaching their point of march—The whole, transmuting discontent and despair into increased reliance on the leader, and increased homage to the God, of Israel.

Those were the actual requisitions—for each and all those were accomplished. There could be few more salutary lessons for the sceptic, than to task his sagacity for the *human means*, by which such requisitions could be satisfied. When he experimentally finds the barrenness, the conflicting follies, and the helpless results, of human contrivance, he may at length learn to humble himself before the sublime efficiency of inspiration.

Like all the statements of Scripture, the whole narrative forms a remarkably plain and natural exhibition of the employ of human motives, serving a purpose altogether above man.

The tribes of Israel had marched from Egypt in open triumph. They had not even taken advantage of the national terror on the night of the Passover; but had expressly waited for the day; and then, in the face of the country, come forth, “with a high hand.” The Egyptians and their king were left stricken and motionless through fear. The Israelites had come forth, bearing the bones of Joseph; thus spurning all connexion with their old task-masters, and in full assurance that they were marching to the possession of Canaan. Their march had been directed to the head of the Red Sea, by which they were to pass into the Wilderness.

But the sudden tidings were brought to the king, that, instead of following this open route, they had turned on their steps, left Canaan be-

hind, and were now hurrying, in the confusion of *flight*<sup>1</sup>, down the shore to the south, by a route which could lead them only into the heart of Africa; and even that they had already entangled themselves in defiles where, if pursued, they could neither fight nor fly<sup>2</sup>. What could be the natural impression on the mind of any man, but that this unaccountable and frantic movement argued some ruinous change in the condition of the multitude, either revolt from their leader, or desertion by their God? The king felt that in either case they were in his power. The conception of all around him was like his own, that the

<sup>1</sup> *Ὅτι πεφευγε ὁ λαός.* (Septuag.)

<sup>2</sup> The spot at which the passage was effected, is still a subject of some controversy. That learned and intelligent traveller, Shaw, observes, that there are two roads by which the people might have reached Pi-hahiroth: the one through the valley of Jendily, &c. bounded by the hills of the Lower Thebaïs; the other to the northward, with those mountains on the right, and the Desert on the left, till it turns through a remarkable ravine into the valley of Baideah. Here the Israelites were ordered to encamp, in the mouth of the defile, between Migdol and the Sea. The name *Baideah* signifies miraculous; and it also bears the more peculiar name of *Tiah Beni Israel*, the road of the children of Israel. A mountain near the spot is still called *Jebel Attakah*, the mountain of deliverance; and on the opposite side lies *Shur*, the Desert where the Israelites are supposed to have first reached the land. The passage there is *ten* miles. Niebuhr and Burckhardt, on the contrary, conceive it to have been made near Suez, once called El Kolsum, where the distance is but *three*.

period had arrived for making a general recapture of the Israelite slaves. The heart of Pharaoh's courtiers and councillors "was turned against the people, and they said, 'Why have we done this, that we have let Israel go from serving us?'" Relieved of the pressure of their fears, their native cruelty and rapine had sprung up with renewed vigour. The royal compact and the national sufferings were equally forgotten in the new hope of seizing, or slaying, the Israelites in their first perplexity: and the monarch and his troops pursued the fugitives without delay.

But all was by the declared agency of Heaven. The change of march had been made with the express object of converting the unextinguished passions of the king into their own punishment. "Speak to the children of Israel," was the language of Jehovah to Moses, "that they shall turn and encamp before Pi-hahiroth.—For Pharaoh will say of the children of Israel, they are entangled in the land, the wilderness hath shut them in."

The punishment of Pharaoh and his army, the chief agents in the cruelties exercised on Israel, was essential: as vindicating the Divine abhorrence of a murderer, and the instruments of his crimes; and perhaps highly important, as a security for the future peace of the chosen people. The sudden prospect of trampling on them with impunity could alone have stimulated the scourged and trembling tyranny of Egypt to provoke

war with the nation led by Moses, and protected by Heaven. With a formidable force of six hundred chariots, and cavalry, a force perhaps comprehending the chief nobility, as well as the principal military strength of his kingdom, Pharaoh followed them along the shore ; where he found them encamped, with a mountain ridge on their right, the sea on their left, and in front only a continuation of the defile ; and even that stopped, a few miles further on, by an arm of the sea.

No situation could be more desperate. The Israelites, obviously awakened to their difficulty, and terrified at the sight of the Egyptian army in pursuit, exclaimed against the rashness which had attempted their deliverance, only to expose them to massacre. With a bitter taunt they cry out to their leader, “ Were there no graves in Egypt, that thou hast taken us away to die in the wilderness ? ” He is unshaken, attempts to restore their confidence, declares that there is no ground for fear, that Heaven will fight their battle, and pronounces that they shall see their enemy no more.

But it is remarkable, that the faith of Moses seems to have been as much subjected to trial as that of his feeble-spirited countrymen ; for the manner in which the hand of Heaven was to be exercised was still unrevealed. He probably looked for the destruction of the Egyptians by some great agency of nature. Yet, if they had been swept



away by a simoom, a tempest, an earthquake, or any similar visitation, it is clear that the ultimate object, the proof to both Egypt and Israel of the direct power of Heaven, would have been but imperfectly attained. Some of so large a host would naturally have escaped; and even if all had perished, the pride of Egypt would have turned the loss into a mere mischance of war and climate; a conclusion which would have left her equally prompt to take advantage of the first occasion of striking a final blow at her former slaves.

There is an obvious succession in the Divine commands to Moses. The first is only to “stretch out his rod over the Red Sea,”—“that the Israelites may pass on dry ground.” The enemy’s attack, in the interval, is baffled and bewildered by the preternatural darkness which envelopes them. But all is provided for with the same consummate circumspection. Even the passage of the Israelites *by night*, may have been a precaution against their habitual fears. They follow through the sea-bed, unappalled by those natural terrors of the transit, from which they might have shrunk in the light of day. The same obscurity which precludes the fears of the Israelites, also precludes the caution of the Egyptians. The movement of so vast a multitude could not have been unheard in the Egyptian camp. They instantly follow the sound, and are led into the track of the retreating nation. But, perplexed by the solid darkness of

the cloud, and evidently retarded by the slow movement of their chariots—"for they drave them heavily"—they labour during the night along the channel of the sea, without being able to reach the Israelites.

At length the "morning watch" is come: the whole body of the Israelites have reached the shore; the whole body of the Egyptians have poured into the sea-bed. The cloud rises, and the entire scene (and surely none more anxious, strange, and magnificent, ever lay beneath the human eye) opens to Moses and to Israel: the watery mountains; the solemn and terrible valley; the long array of the Egyptian squadrons glittering round their king: the whole pomp of war, contrasted with the awfulness of nature under the very impress of miracle. Still Moses awaits the Divine will: probably to the last moment unconscious of the means by which it was to be fulfilled. The blow does not yet fall; the arrogance of the king and his host is to be humbled to the acknowledgment, before they die, that there is no strength in war against the chosen people. At last, they cry out that "the Lord fighteth for Israel." They turn in despair. The command is now given. "And the Lord said unto Moses, Stretch out thine hand over the sea, that the waters may come again upon the Egyptians." The destruction was total:—"and the waters returned, and covered the chariots and the horsemen, and all the host

of Pharaoh that came into the sea after them. There remained not so much as one of them<sup>1</sup>." The direct result of the miracle in the chosen people was a change of the national heart from doubt, mutiny, and despair, to faith, obedience, and joy. "And Israel saw that great work, which the Lord did upon the Egyptians, and the people *feared* the Lord, and *believed* the Lord, and his servant Moses<sup>2</sup>." The mere narration of this mighty miracle is evidence that it was Divine. The simplicity of the means, contrasted with the variety of the objects, the completeness of their accomplishment, and the suitableness of both to the true idea of the Deity, as protector and punisher; place it as much beyond the conception, as the execution, of human powers.

The remaining miracles can be merely glanced at. But there is one striking characteristic of them all; the vastness of their scale. The calculation of the number who marched out of Egypt, cannot be much less than three millions<sup>3</sup>. Thus every miracle which applied to the whole population, was of an astonishing magnitude; and

<sup>1</sup> Exod. xiv. 28.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid. xiv. 31.

<sup>3</sup> Six hundred thousand men of military age; implying an equal number above and below that age, one million two hundred thousand; and the number of females equal to that of the males; besides "a mixed multitude."

thus, totally precluding all possibility of collusion or human contrivance. The Egyptian plagues spread over a whole realm at once. The march of the Israelites through the Red Sea was the movement of a host, as large as that of Xerxes. And it is among the wonders of the Divine hand, that this vast multitude, encumbered as it was with women and children, and bringing its cattle, should have been moved across a strait, at least three miles in breadth, if not ten, between sunset and sunrise; while the passage of the Hellespont, with all the vigorous habits and active preparations of a soldiery, occupied five days.

On this scale, every act of miracle was, not simply a display of power above man, but a stupendous display of that power. It goes further still; it renders every common circumstance of the Israelite march a miracle. The well of which they drank must have poured out a preternatural stream. The purification of the waters of Marah must have been beyond the natural powers of any herb, or of any product of earth, from the mere magnitude of the operation; it was to supply water for the thirst of three millions of people. The rock stricken by Moses, must have poured out, not a gush of water, but the copious and continued flow of a river. The manna which fed them, “an omer<sup>1</sup> for every man,” must have

<sup>1</sup> An omer is about half a peck.

poured down in overwhelming quantities. The quails which fed them for a day, must have come in flights, not of thousands, but millions.

An attempt has been made to account for the mortality which seized the Israelites, after feeding on the quails; by supposing that those birds had fed on poisonous plants. But, in this case the quails themselves would naturally have been the first sufferers. It is true, that some animals will eat food unwholesome to man; and equally true, that some animals are by nature unfit for human food. But we have still to find the instance, where an animal, the natural food of man, turns its flesh into poison for him, without first dying of the operation.

But in reasoning of this order, the sceptic uniformly omits the true characters of the miracle. Those were not in the mere flight of quails, which, taken alone, might be attributed to accident; but in the distinct declaration, that it was for an answer and a punishment to the Israelite murmurings; and in the fulfilment of the words, that the meat for which they clamoured should be given to them in such measureless superfluity, “that it should be loathsome to them;” meat, “not for a day, nor for two, nor five, nor ten, nor twenty days, but even a whole month, till it came out at their

nostrils<sup>1</sup>.” Moses himself is evidently alike startled by the declaration, and unacquainted with the means. He asks, “Shall all the fish of the sea be gathered to suffice them, or shall the flocks and herds be slain, thus to feed them for a month?” He is answered by the remonstrance—“Is the Lord’s hand waxed short? Thou shalt see.”

The flight then comes, and in such abundance, as to cover the camp and the land round it, a day’s journey<sup>2</sup> on every side. “He that gathered least gathered ten omers.” They spread them out to dry round the camp, secure of provision for a long period. But, in the full enjoyment of the luxury, the Divine declaration is fulfilled. Death is upon them; they are smitten with “a very great plague.”

It is also overlooked by those who conceive the quails to have fed on poison before they were to poison the Israelites; that a flight of quails had, in the second month of their dwelling in the desert,

<sup>1</sup> Numb. xi. 20.

<sup>2</sup> From ten to twenty miles. Harmer childishly observes, that the smaller extent would be preferable, “as it would soften the objection to their being quails, founded on their *immense quantity*.” As if the whole were not a declared display of the power of the Creator. Such an observer would stipulate for the gathering up of *six* baskets, instead of twelve, in the miracle of the loaves and fishes, “to soften the objection” to its being *within the power of—Omnipotence*.

been sent to the people for food, and sent without any resulting injury. The reason for this striking difference may be, that in the latter instance the clamours of the multitude were in some degree excusable, from their having totally exhausted their Egyptian provisions, and seeing nothing before them but famine<sup>1</sup>. They were upbraided with their want of faith ; but the Divine answer was, that by the supply they should *know* that they were under the protection of Jehovah. They ate, and were filled ; on the next morning the permanent supply of manna was given. The contrast may not less explain why, in the abundant variety of human food, quails alone were again brought to the camp. The people had now been for years in the enjoyment of an unfailing sustenance, they were without the excuse of any fear of famine, their murmurs arose not from necessity, but from insolence ; and therefore, to convince them of their crime, the very food which had once been a harmless gratification, was now a source of ruin ; the instrument of a sudden and sweeping pestilence ; death let loose at the instant ; “ while the flesh was yet between their teeth, they died.”

The food and clothing of the people were miracles, on the same stupendous scale of magnitude,

<sup>1</sup> Exod. xvi. 3.

enhanced by extraordinary duration ;—the food and clothing of *millions* for *forty years*. “ I have led you forty years in the wilderness,” is the express language ; “ your clothes are not waxen old upon you, and thy shoe is not waxen old upon thy foot<sup>1</sup>.” In defiance, rash and presumptuous defiance, of this language, it has been asserted that the Israelites might have been supplied with clothing by their own flocks, or by traffic with the caravans and neighbouring countries.

But how was the immense quantity of material necessary for this purpose to be obtained ? Moses evidently estimates their flocks and herds at not more than sufficient for the supply of a month, even for food ; how much less sufficient for the supply of a year’s clothing ? If traffic were to be the resource, where existed the means ? The soil produced nothing ; they could not sell the manna ; their gold consisted chiefly in the ornaments of their women, as we must conclude from their contributions to the golden materials of the tabernacle. It was the question, of clothing three millions of people without money, produce, or disposable labour ! Thus we are driven back to the text, and the text declares it to be altogether a work of Deity, and combines it with the supply of food, an acknowledged miracle. Have we a right to divide them, or to conclude that one was more difficult than the other, or to deny either ?

<sup>1</sup>.Deut. xxix. 5.



The conduct of Moses during those high events is entitled to rank among the Evidences of Revelation. Strongly opposed to the character which a fictitious narrative *must* draw of a human leader, achieving, by human means, the deliverance of a people from slavery ; it is incomparably true to the character of a leader acting altogether under the direction of Heaven.

Some writers, negligently overlooking the distinction ; some, criminally attempting to degrade the testimony ; and some, in idle zeal, have laboured to fill up the simple outline of Scripture with the broad lineaments and colourings which constitute popular renown. Moses is thus blazoned, as exhibiting the most consummate union of all the qualities of command ; dextrous and refined in his conversion of Egyptian science to the purposes of Hebrew civilization ; unrivalled in fertility of resource among the various and perpetual difficulties of an enterprise equally trying by its novelty and its magnitude ; and bequeathing to the admiration of mankind a model of the labours and the triumphs of genius in his civil government, warlike exploits, and religious discipline. Thus, robed in honours, which his pure and simple nature would be the last to claim ; he is exhibited to us in the successive garbs of the legislator, the chieftain, the statesman, and the hierarch ; and, in all, held forth to levy a contribution upon our homage.

But this is not the leader of Israel. Scripture, shutting out altogether the image of this imposing and formidable combination of powers, fitter to take its stand among the idols and demi-gods of a heathen temple, than among the monuments of revealed holiness ; places before us the memory of a man distinguished only for the silent and retiring qualities of meekness and sincerity. The champion of the slave, and founder of a people, is an aged man, totally beyond the period of ambition ; a dweller in the Desert, reluctantly returning to the world ; and there passing through the most glittering scenes of triumph, as he passes through the most overwhelming scenes of danger, alike, with his eyes fixed above the world.

But this character is incomparably faithful to the consistency of Providence. When the purpose is mere human revolution, there human qualities may be the natural instruments. The sword may smite the sword ; the race may be to the swift, and the battle to the strong. But the true war of Israel was to be waged in a loftier region : not with man, nor by man ; but with the subtler and more powerful enemies, who combine human hostility with Divine rebellion, and against whom the weapons must be drawn from the armoury of God. It was the conflict, not of the Egyptian against the Hebrew, but of darkness against light ; and not for the punishment or possession of such fragments of the earth as either

Egypt or Palestine, but for the territory of an empire, which was to be as broad as the earth, and as enduring as its foundations. And this characteristic shapes every feature of the great transaction. While the battle was to be fought in the kingdom of the prince of the power of the air, man could be no more than a spectator ; while the thunders of that solemn and tremendous conflict descended to him only in the murmurs of oracles and echoes of inspiration, he could only listen and adore.

Even where the Jewish leader is forced to mingle in the actual struggle of human passions, his aspect is totally distinct from that of the glowing and impetuous chieftain, stretching through the field after the crown that fame and victory bear upon the wing. He is still the submissive servant of a higher will. Whether bringing the tempest of wrath on Egypt or Amalek, he awaits the moment of the Divine command. The whirlwind and the storm are there ; but he is neither appalled, nor hurried along, by their power ; he points them to the task, with the lofty confidence and sacred serenity of the directing angel.

Thus, Scripture rends away the fabricated honours, which can only encumber and obscure the true dignity of the Jewish leader. Of the law, it does not suffer us to ascribe to him the merit of a single line ; the whole code, down to the most minute detail, even of the slightest ceremonial, is ex-

pressly declared to have been by *direct Revelation*. Of the guidance of the people, every successive step is equally by the direct command of Heaven. And, apparently, for the purpose of sustaining him with that wisdom, by which alone he was to be guided day by day; the mysteries of the Divine communication are declared to be suspended, in his instance, and Moses alone is to be answered, “face to face,” “not in dark speeches,” but as “friend with friend.”

In the thronging perplexities of his civil government, he enters the tabernacle, and supplicates knowledge from Him, “that sitteth between the cherubim.” In the rebellions of the tribes, he spreads out his hands to Heaven; and awaits its protecting plagues and fires. In the battle, he kneels within sight of the host, and brings down victory by prayer. Even in so simple an act of authority, as the movement of the Israelite camp from an exhausted pasture, or a failing well, he exerts no choice, he is still dependent on the superior guidance. He waits, for months, or years, the rising of the pillar of cloud and flame; and then instantly strikes the tents of Israel, and follows the “glory of the Lord” through valley, plain, and mountain.

Yet this character, though so totally separated from the qualities which constitute eminence in the common strifes of mankind; and exhibiting no trace of the self-prompted and daring decision

which wings the hero across the height and depth of human things, may be essentially of a much higher elevation. The noble obedience of Moses, born of gratitude, faith, and love, may be immeasurably more dignified than the mortal mixture of earth's mould, that shapes the man, fittest for the general successes of a violent, bitter, crafty, and cruel world. The qualities of the triumpher must too often be like the qualities of his instruments and his victims. But great talents are themselves among the most powerful temptations. The prizes of the world are made for them; and the very intensity of their gaze at the object of their ambition prevents them from discovering the depths between; there is no humiliation in whatever gains the end; the arrogant and rebellious spirit, bound on his voyage to supremacy, as eagerly "shaves with level wing the deep," as "soars up to the burning concave."

Yet what were human honours or abilities to the man who stood before the ETERNAL; who dwelt with Him in his clouds and thunders; and who returned among mankind with the visible glory on his brow, a more illustrious diadem than was ever worn by kings! Of all the sons of Adam, Moses was the most highly honoured by God—and yet his simple merits are within the power of every man that lives.

## CHAPTER XXXIII.

### THE KINGDOM.

THE history of Israel, from the death of Moses to the close of the theocracy, by the anointing of Saul as king; was a continual alternation of popular crimes and popular repentance, of heavy inflictions and signal deliverances. The besetting sin of the Israelite was idolatry; and this crime, as above all others, extinguishing the benefits and the nature of true religion, was visited with unfailing punishment. Yet the Divine mercy was so much superior to the national guilt, that in the long career of almost five centuries, scarcely less than four can be assigned to general prosperity and protection. The separate Tribes were often severely scourged; and the national suffering increased from the time of Abimelech, who first dared to insult the spirit of the theocracy, and who earned an abhorred and a brief throne, and an ignominious death, by the insult. But the theocracy was, in its general aspect, the happiest period ever known by Israel.

And the prophet Samuel was fatally justified in upbraiding the folly and ingratitude which exchanged the lofty long-suffering of their Divine Monarch, for the caprices and severities of an earthly king.

But, culpable as the change was, it was bent to the purposes of Providence. The conquest of Canaan was still incomplete ; the national worship was still to derive final strength, purity, and splendour, from the building of a Temple ; the several commonwealths of the Tribes, often jarring, and always jealous, were still to be compacted into the form and united energy of a nation. It is not improbable that this consolidation of the state had some reference to the renewed strength of the Babylonian empire, and the shape of vigour which all the nations surrounding Palestine were already tending to assume. It is no contradiction to this idea, that Israel so soon rendered herself unfit to perform her share in the new system of security. Providence often submits to be repelled by the folly of man ; but it is at his peril. To establish the powerful, compact, and warlike state, essential to meet the change in the Oriental governments ; if not also to meet the growth, remote as it was, of those more memorable governments, which, from Greece and Italy, were yet to flood Asia with war ; the gentle influence of the priest, and the intermitted authority of the Judge, were not the natural means.

The three great successive operations, of combining the provinces into a kingdom ; of completing the subjugation of those enemies which still usurped a place in the land ; and of establishing the national law and religion in magnificent supremacy ; seem to have been expressly provided for in the characters of the three successive sovereigns : Saul, ambitious, arbitrary, and jealous of power ; David, popular, daring, and indefatigable in war ; and Solomon, pacific and splendid, kingly in his nature, at the head of intellectual distinction, and devoting all his better years to the grandeur of his kingdom and his religion.

The period appointed to each of the three operations was accurately equal ; each monarch reigned forty years <sup>1</sup>.

But the sleepless vigilance of the Divine government is the perpetual lesson of Scripture. The change of the theocracy had been distinctly announced five hundred years before by the lips of Moses <sup>2</sup> ; and ordinances had even then been given to provide against its prominent evils. Those ordinances were, that the king should be chosen according to the declared election of God ; that he should not be a foreigner ; that he should not sin by the habitual polygamy of Paganism ; nor amass

<sup>1</sup> Acts xiii. 21 ; 2 Sam. v. 4. ; 1 Kings xi. 42.

<sup>2</sup> When thou art come into the land, which the Lord thy God giveth, and shalt possess it, and shalt say, *I will set a king over me*, like all the nations that are about me. Deut. xvii. 14.



unwieldy treasures of gold and silver ; nor adopt the habits of Eastern conquest, by raising large forces of cavalry. A peculiar command enjoined that a copy of the law should be made for his especial use, and should form his constant study. On those conditions the throne was to be continued in prosperity and power, to him and to his children.

The importance of those rules to the condition of Judæa is clear, but they are universal. The principles of national security were never more distinctly laid before mankind, than in this brief and simple summary.—A native prince—an army limited to defence—royal and popular morals guided by Scripture—revenues not amassed for royal luxury or national ambition, but sent back through the popular channels for the general use, animation, and improvement of the community.

It is impossible not to recognize in those principles a provision for national strength, divested of all the qualities which excite the intrigues, justify the alarms, or tempt the cupidity of surrounding kingdoms.

With the death of Solomon commenced the decline of Judæa. By a melancholy and startling inconsistency, the monarch who had raised the temple with such unrivalled pomp, was himself the first to stain it with Paganism. The vengeance was prompt and terrible. From that hour, his kingdom stood upon the verge of the grave. Paganism had been the crime, and it was made

the punishment ; the flame of the polluted altar shot earthward, and devoured its worshippers. The reign of Solomon was thenceforth harassed with angry insurrection ; and he died, leaving the world its most memorable warning, of the fatal facility with which the passions can overthrow the most illustrious gifts of nature and fortune. Yet he may have formed a not less memorable instance of the exhaustless nature of the Divine compassion. And the deep convictions of his expiring years ; his solemn acknowledgments of the emptiness of human grandeur, and his true summation of all happiness, in the simple precept of “ doing justice, and walking humbly before God,” may console us with the thought, that this greatest man, and monarch, that ever sat upon a throne, rests in glory.

Idolatry was the strong temptation of ancient life ; its festivals engaged the idle, its pleasures allured the profligate, and its substitution of light services for the severe demands of moral duties, enlisted on its side the whole infinite multitude to whom all things are easier than self-controul. The voluptuous climate of the East, naturally disposing man, at once, to festivity and indolence, gave this system of solemn and splendid licentiousness irresistible attractions for the popular mind. The Israelite, who, in the free air of the wilderness, had clamoured for Egyptian slavery ; who, in the daily descent of the bread from Heaven, had

mutinied for the gross food of his task-masters ; and who, at the foot of Sinai, while the clouds and thunders of the Divine presence were rolling above his head, had worshipped an idol ; could have been preserved from this madness in Canaan only by a perpetual miracle. Once undisputed lord of the rich possessions of the idolator, he plunged headlong into his crimes. The Philistine wars, like the Egyptian chains, had partially repelled the popular mind from the religion of its enemy. But, with his extinction, the abhorrence of his customs passed away ; and that temptation, against which Moses had warned the tribes, “ when they were to come into the land, and possess it,” and, in the fulness of their prosperity, they were to “ forget their God ;” now came upon them in ruin. The rebellion of the ten tribes, disguised under murmurs at the rigorous exactions of Solomon, or the boyish insolence of his successor, showed its true motive in the rapid erection of idolatrous altars. From the division of the kingdom, the long period of two centuries and a half witnessed the crimes and partial punishments of the revolters ; until their cup was full, and they were swept by the Assyrian, Shalmanezar, into returnless captivity. Judah, awakened by the lesson, to comparative virtue, was tried for a hundred and thirty-four years longer. But the lesson was at last for-

gotten ; the native habits prevailed ; and she was sent, like Israel, to learn, in the Assyrian fetter, the judgments of Heaven.

Yet, in the fates of the two kingdoms, there was a striking distinction. To Israel, the captivity was ruin ; to Judah, discipline. No prophet cheered the exile of Israel with the promise of return ; while, to Judah, not only were the most solemn declarations of prophecy pledged for her return ; but the time was fixed, the means were stated, even the name of the instrument was given,—the mighty Persian, by whom the gates of her prison were to be thrown open, and her people sent back, once more, to “ sit under their own vine and their own fig-tree.” The distinction of punishment must, in justice, have been founded on the distinction of crime. The revolt of Israel from her king and her God was instant, national, and irreclaimable. Judah had adhered to her king, and often returned to her God. Thus was room left for the performance of that high benediction, by which it was declared that the sovereignty should never be finally extinguished in Judah, until He came, in whose hand was finally to rest the sceptre of all nations. But the punishment of idolatry was inevitable. Four hundred and sixty-eight years from the beginning of David’s reign in Jerusalem, and three hundred and eighty-eight from the revolt of Israel, Jerusalem was

taken by Nebuchadnezzar; the temple, palaces, and city, were laid in ashes, and the people swept away into servitude.

Judah was now sunk to the lowest depths of suffering; yet she was not forgotten. While the prophets Obadiah, Ezekiel, and Jeremiah, cheered her misfortunes, by unfolding, in language of unrivalled power, visions of the future, surpassing all the dreams of earthly triumph, or loftily denounced ruin against her oppressors; Daniel was raised to all but supreme authority in Babylon, to form at once her protector by his influence, her example by his virtue, and her consolation by the most distinct and exalting prophecies ever transmitted to the ancient world.

At the close of the predicted seventy years of bondage, Judah returned<sup>1</sup>, but with numbers heavily diminished. She found the land over-

<sup>1</sup> It was on the eve of this deliverance that the famous prophecy of the "seventy weeks," the seven times seventy years, was given to Daniel, in answer to his strong and pathetic supplication. It is striking to observe how deeply the painful part of the prediction is enveloped in mystery, while the promise of the Messiah is so richly expanded to the eminent servant of God, to cheer and reward whom it was given. The prophecy itself is still but imperfectly interpreted. All the commentators have failed to attain any exact interpretation. Yet it is perfectly capable of one. The whole error results from a simple, though inveterate misconception.

run with thorns and thistles, large portions of it in the possession of wild and nameless strangers, and the Samaritans raising a rival power and a rival worship. Canaan lay before her, as it lay when she first set foot within its borders ; but with its beauty desolate ; for the free and rejoicing millions of Joshua, marching with the pillar of fire before them, and vanquishing by miracle, Judah saw her tribes dependent on the bounty of a heathen master, broken in spirit, enfeebled in numbers, and surrounded with enemies, jealous of her rights, contemptuous of her power, and bitter against her religion. All was to be founded again ; she had to fight her whole way upward, and find every step a struggle, not for dominion, but for existence.

The total dispersion of the ten Tribes, conveys a striking reply to the surmise, that there is something in the Jewish nature which forbids national extinction ; a physical abhorrence of mixture with foreign habits, which preserves the Jew distinct from all other men. In the ten Tribes we see an assimilation so complete, that nearly all traces of their existence have vanished : this impracticable and unmalleable race, taking the shape of the stranger, even to the verge of identity ; exile, like a vast tomb, dissolving them into the general elements of human nature, and leaving no more distinction between the Israelite and the Tartar, or the Mede, than between the dust

of the dead<sup>1</sup>. If the man of Judah survives all the changes of time and nations, a monumental man, it is by a higher cause than the operation of nature. Neither his customs, his prejudices, his sufferings, nor his blood, are sufficient to account for that ominous severance from mankind, which makes him, ruingled as he is with all the transactions of earth, still belong to another state of human being; exhibit in his principles, pursuits, and countenance, the seal of two thousand years ago; and, by a fatality which follows him round the world, wear among all nations the indelible stamp of exile and misfortune. The pillar of salt, that stood for so many ages by the Dead Sea, to remind his ancestors of the guilt of "looking back," when the hand of Heaven led forward, was not a stronger testimonial than the living Jew. The force and multitude of the people had gone down with Israel; they slept, with their national crimes, under the

<sup>1</sup> This, however, is said only with reference to the final absorption of those Jews into the mass of the Persian subjects, &c. Large bodies of them continued separate for a considerable period in Media. The Babylonian Jews constituted a community until within fifty years of the Christian era. A few settlements of "black Jews" exist in India, which have been described by Buchanan as preserving the traditions, and professing themselves to be the descendants of the ten Tribes. But such trivial exceptions make no difference in the general fate of the multitude.

waters. Judah “looked back,” in the day when the very angels of the Divine will, the leaders and ministering spirits of Christianity, were pointing to the city of refuge. The shower of wrath reached the lingerer ; and there she stands, immoveable and unchangeable, until the great day when all shall change.



## CHAPTER XXXIV.

### THE RESTORATION OF JUDAH.

THE third period from the close of the captivity to the final fall of Jerusalem, a period exceeding the former by about a century and a half, bore a character signally different from both. The true view of Providence is, unquestionably, that of a Divine energy perpetually exerting itself to extract good out of evil. God tempts no man. He gives no impulse to the natural evil of the heart ; but he lays no restraints on human liberty ; If prince or people will open their ears to the tempter, their way to ruin is free.

But the triumph of the Divine benevolence is thenceforth to be won, in the consummate skill of converting the very instruments of evil into the unconscious agents of good ; in subverting the adversary, by the consequence of his own acts ; and even in turning the severest necessary punishments of nations into the material of happiness to mankind.

The utter extinction of the ten tribes was made

an element of preserving religion in Judæa. The Babylonish captivity had been a bitter lesson; but the human mind is elastic, and speedily forgets the wisdom of adversity with the pain. The Egyptian bondage had been a lesson of still keener severity; yet the bond-slaves had scarcely become freemen, when the whip and the dungeon were forgotten, and the Israelite danced and feasted before an idol. If the twelve tribes had returned, and filled the land once more, possession and power might have rapidly obliterated all records of a suffering, so injurious to the national pride. No human barrier could have resisted their passion for idolatry; and the sojourn in Babylon, as in Egypt, would have only added their foreign profligacy to their original licentiousness.

But the days of Jewish plenitude were past. Judah returned less a chastised people than a humiliated remnant; less an established religion, than a tolerated sect; less bearing the port and dignity of sovereigns of the land, than as slaves, stooping under old vassalage, and ejected from the Babylonian dungeon, to wear the vestiges of the chain upon them to the end of their days. For five hundred years longer, Judah continued a trembling and subdued people, existing on the caprice, or degraded into the prize, of the heathen.

But the discipline of her idolatry was successful.

From the hour of that return, she never voluntarily bowed before an idol. Poverty, anxiety, and suffering, were her guardians, stronger than the remonstrances of her prophets, and more vigilant than the ordinances of her kings.

The restoration of Judah, even in its slightest view, is full of the most vivid and significant features of history. At the close of the seventy years' captivity (B. C. 536), two years from the fall of Babylon, Cyrus, sole master of the great Persian empire, issued a decree, authorizing the return of the Jewish captives to their own land, and the rebuilding of their Temple; further declaring, that the decree was by the *express command of Heaven*<sup>1</sup>. The captives, nearly to the number of 50,000, under Zerubbabel, the Prince, and Joshua, the High Priest, returned, and laid the foundation of the Temple: the young shouted for joy; but the aged wept at its inferiority to the fallen Temple of their fathers.

The heathen governors and priests, who had possessed the land during the captivity, strongly resisted the progress of the building; and excited the proverbial suspicions of an eastern court, by representing the people to the Persian monarch as "rebellious of old, hurtful to kings and

<sup>1</sup> Ezra i. 2.

princes, and movers of sedition." The result of those intrigues was a royal order, forbidding the erection of the Temple. But the prophets Haggai and Zechariah cheered the people by Divine promises of strength and security; an appeal was made before the Persian monarch to the original decree of Cyrus, and the Temple was finally raised. (B.C. 515.) Yet the nation was still singularly feeble: the Temple was defenceless; the law and the prophets were scarcely known; the whole civil polity required to be fixed; and the whole of the national customs and principles were in the most immediate need of purification.

A memorable man was now raised up, by the express will of Heaven, to form and fix the Restoration. Ezra, a priest, of the line of Aaron, eminent in the learning of the Scriptures, a "ready scribe in the law of Moses, on whom the hand of his God was<sup>1</sup>;" and who had been "of the captivity," came from Babylon, commissioned for the various purposes of establishing the people, renewing the sacrifices, and "beautifying the house of the Lord." In a passage of ardent and noble piety, he attributes this commission, and his own favour and protection among the princes of the land, solely to the good will of Heaven. "Blessed be the Lord God of our fathers, which hath

<sup>1</sup> Ezra vii. 6.

extended mercy to me before the king and his counsellors, and before all the king's mighty princes. And I was strengthened, as the hand of the Lord my God was upon me<sup>1</sup>."

Thus called by inspiration, this distinguished servant of God commenced the arduous work of establishing the true worship on its final foundation. Crossing the desert without the usual escort, from a pure and sacred determination to show that the power of God alone was his confidence—"for he would be ashamed to require of the king a band of soldiers and horsemen, because he had spoken unto the king, saying, 'the hand of our God is upon all them for good that seek him;'" he and his followers sought the stronger protection of fasting and prayer, and reached Jerusalem in safety. (B.C. 457.)

But there his energy was severely tried. He found the spirit of the Restoration deeply perverted. The chosen people had lost the virtue which distinguished them on their first return, and had mingled with the surrounding heathen by marriage, until they were on the verge of heathenism themselves. Ezra, with all his courage, almost despaired. "The princes," he pathetically tells us, "came to me, saying, the people of Israel, and the priests and the Levites, have not separated themselves from the people of the land,

<sup>1</sup> Ezra vii. 27, 28.

doing according to their abominations. For they have taken of their daughters for themselves and for their sons ; yea, the hand of the princes and rulers have been the chief in this trespass. And when I heard this thing, I rent my garment and my mantle." The faithful few now came to cheer the desolation of their leader. And at the evening sacrifice he prayed for the people, and receiving strength, commanded the cessation of this guilty intercourse, and was finally obeyed.

But a new and powerful agency was to be summoned. Nehemiah, one of the great officers of the Empire, the " King's cup-bearer," an office of the first rank and confidence ; grieved at the continued difficulties of his country, solicited permission to go to Jerusalem, expressly " that he might build it." He obtained the permission, and witnessing the forlorn and exposed state of the city, repelled the scoffs and violences of the heathen, and proceeded with his work in the name of " the God of Heaven !" His arrival at Jerusalem as a Prince, and with the troops and pomp of civil authority, gave a new impulse to the nation. Employing himself chiefly on the civil restoration of the people, he built the walls and gates ; established order, and forming the dwellers in Jerusalem into a military force, enabled the city and temple to defy the sudden incursions of the heathen. To Ezra was especially committed the more important office of reinstating the national

religion. He performed it with a wisdom and vigour worthy of the highest benefit that patriotism and piety can confer upon man. His first act was to restore the knowledge of the Scriptures. During the captivity, the Scriptures had been forgotten. The terror of offending the pride of the Babylonian priesthood, or bringing down the lash of the task-master; the ignorance of slaves, or the despair of exiles, were alike natural sources of the disuse of the inspired volume. But on the return of the people, a new source of the evil was found in the change of the national tongue. Nearly the whole living generation had been born in the captivity; the Chaldee had become the universal dialect, and the sacred books were almost in a dead language.

The popular voice was now loudly raised for the possession of the Scriptures once more. Ezra brought them forward in full assembly of "the congregation, both men and women," and, surrounded by the princes or nobles of the nation, read—"from a pulpit of wood, which they had made for the purpose," the book from morning till mid-day. The communication was without restraint—"And Ezra opened the book in the sight of all the people, for he was above all the people; and when he opened it, all the people stood up" The volume was received with solemn and grateful veneration.—"And Ezra blessed the Lord, the great God. And all the people an-

swered, Amen, with lifting up their hands ; and they bowed their heads and worshipped the Lord, with their faces to the ground<sup>1</sup>.” He was followed by priests, who translated the precepts into the vernacular tongue :—“ Levites, who read in the book of God *distinctly*, and *gave the sense*, and caused them to *understand* the reading<sup>2</sup>.” The day itself was remarkable, as the first of the seventh month, the beginning of the civil year, and the Feast of Trumpets<sup>3</sup>. It was the fitting day for the announcement of a recovery that was yet to animate and awake the world. But “ the people wept when they heard the words of the law.” Ezra and Nehemiah commanded that they should exhibit the rejoicing of which such a day was worthy.—“ They said to them, go your way and eat the fat, and drink the sweet—neither be ye sorry. For this day is holy unto the Lord.”

The first influence of the revival of the Scriptures was felt in an extraordinary spirit of sacred activity. Synagogues were extensively built through the land. Religious instruction was vigorously spread. For the first time in the national annals, the books of the Mosaic history and law, interpreted into the popular tongue<sup>4</sup> by either the

<sup>1</sup> Nehem. viii. 4, &c.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid. viii. 7, 8.

<sup>3</sup> Lev. xxv. 9.

<sup>4</sup> The Chaldee was so habitual, that the Book of Ezra, consisting only of ten chapters, is Chaldee from the 8th verse of



priest, or an attendant minister of the synagogue, were regularly read as a portion of the service ; and places of prayer for the solitary devotion, so congenial to the habits of the East, were erected on the sides of the roads, and spots made memorable by public events ; in which the traveller, or the man of lonely piety, might kneel surrounded by the glorious scenery of hill and valley, with Jerusalem in his horizon, and a still holier and more magnificent Jerusalem before his mind.

It is equally matter of record, that from this period commenced a striking enlargement of the national religious conceptions. The prophecies were more anxiously searched for the promised coming of the Messiah ; the immortality of the soul became a more recognized and practical doctrine ; and the abhorrence of idolatry was conspicuous and complete. When we recollect the resistless national propensity of earlier times, to plunge into the deepest pollutions of the worship of images ; this sudden, total, and permanent change forms one of the most distinguished instances of the power of truth to purify the mind. For the only instrumentality to which we can

the 4th to the 27th of the 7th, with the exception of some verses in the sixth. With the learned Jews, the languages were probably in equal use. But the distinction of the people who "could understand," from those who required an interpreter, shows the prevalence of the Chaldee among the multitude.

assign the change, is the more habitual and public reading of the Scriptures. The chains of the captivity might have partially subdued, or warned, the self-willed spirit of the Jewish idolator ; but their effect must have been temporary. Punishments and mercies are soon and equally forgotten by nations. The countless majority of the Hebrews had remained in Chaldæa, neither softened nor warned, and were hourly sinking more and more into the Paganism in which they were finally and for ever absorbed ; while the feeble remnant who returned to Palestine, less than fifty thousand out of the redundant population of the twelve tribes, proclaimed in all succeeding ages the abhorrence of idolatry as the characteristic of their nation.

Another change existed in the inferior pomp of their worship. The temple itself was on a diminished scale. But not merely the gold and jewels which once enriched all the instruments and forms of its worship were gone ; the captivity had deprived the national worship of loftier treasures than gold or jewels—The ark of the covenant had been burned or carried away in the general ruin by Nebuchadnezzar ; the Urim and Thummim, the oracular gems on the high priest's breastplate were irrecoverable ; the sacred fire on the altar was extinguished ; and the Shekinah appeared no more.

Yet it was declared that the loss of those superb

features of religious celebration should be more than compensated by the increased power and spirituality of religion itself ; that the time was approaching, when all emblems must have given way to reality, and that the “glory of the latter house should exceed the glory of the former.” The last words of the last prophet of Judah proclaimed the high and animating truth, that during its existence the Messiah should be born ; “the Lord whom ye seek shall suddenly come to his temple ;”—HE, who in himself embodied all the glories of the temple of their fathers, whose breast was the living oracle, on whose brow descended the divine splendour, whose heart was the altar of the Divine fire, whose words were prophecy, and whose blood was a covenant of peace, infinite and eternal.

With Nehemiah, the great names of Jewish government expired ; with Malachi the oracle was closed ; its uses were at an end with the captivity. As the miraculous gifts of the apostolic church ceased, when the religion was once firmly planted among mankind ; so the lessons of prophecy were withdrawn, when the more perfect knowledge of the Scriptures, and the more vigorous discipline of the church, supplied at once the consolation and the lesson. So invariable is the rule of Providence, and so totally distinct from the lavishness and ostentation of power, that marks the vanity of man.

## CHAPTER XXXV.

### EZRA.

FROM the dedication of the Temple to the coming of Ezra, nearly fifty-seven years had elapsed ; during which the national character had been severely tried by the difficulties of its position. Palestine was in the possession of barbarians, rendered, probably, more hostile to the returned captives, by a mixture with apostate Jews. But the friendship of the barbarians was to be more fatal than their hostility. As the original corruption of the sons of Seth had been their marriages with the daughters of Cain ; the gradual alliances of the Jews with the heathen masters of Palestine threatened rapidly to degrade them into the morals of heathenism. Ezra's strougest declarations were pronounced against this guilty neglect of the Divine command ; and, as the most essential step to national safety or Divine favour, he enforced the immediate abandonment of this dangerous affinity. After twelve years of thus sustaining the morals and religion of the people, Nehemiah had come,

to establish their polity, and give them a solid footing among nations. But the most important transaction of his life, the public interpretation and translation of the Scriptures, was reserved for this period when, relieved from the immediate cares of authority by Nehemiah, he was at leisure to study and propagate the Divine record. The public delivery of the Scriptures on the Day of Trumpets was in the presence of Nehemiah; and from that time may be dated the great work which the Jews refer to his labours—the collection of all the Sacred Books into one volume, the purification of the Copies, and the original formation of the Canon of Scripture<sup>1</sup>. He died full of years<sup>2</sup>; and honoured by his country, as a second Moses, a new leader from Egyptian darkness into a light that was to be extinguished no more.

But the people required constant vigilance. Nehemiah had scarcely returned to the Persian court, when they relapsed into the prohibited intercourse; he resumed the government, pressed

<sup>1</sup> The great business effected by Ezra was his collecting and setting forth a correct edition of the Holy Scriptures. Of this both Jews and Christians allow him the honour."—*Prideaux*.

The books of Malachi, Nehemiah, Esther, and Ezra himself, were subsequently added, as it is supposed, by Simon the Just: thus completing the Canon.

<sup>2</sup> Ezra died at the age of 120; and is said by Josephus (*Antiq. s. xi.*) to have been buried at Jerusalem; but, by the Jews in general (*B. Tudela*), to have both died and been buried in Persia, where his tomb is still an object of veneration.

upon the people the terrors of alienating the Divine support; the religious impurity of kindred with the worshippers of idols; and the national impolicy of humbling the strength of Judah by alliance with communities essentially hostile to her being. His remonstrances prevailed. The princes, priesthood, and general community, freed themselves from the Pagan stain, chose wives of their own nation, and solemnly renewed their pledge to the strict observance of their religion in its original purity. But the vow was soon broken, and the people were to be taught once more the will, by the wrath, of Heaven.

Ezra and Nehemiah had gone to their reward. From this period the government devolved into the hands of the High Priests, under the general government of the Persian empire. For ages, no temporal viceroy governed Judah. The forms, at least, of the revived religion were observed with scrupulous exactness. Judah flourished; and though she never reached the power of her kingly state, nor the old pomp of her national worship, she lived in comparative security.

But the fatal habit of intermarriage with the Heathen, had never been wholly extirpated; and with the gradual relaxation of her public virtue, the habit became general. The offence of those marriages was, that they necessarily tended to degrade the religious inheritance of the true wor-

shipper. The Jew who wedded a Pagan wife, necessarily proved by the act, that his abhorrence of the spirit of Paganism was extinguished ; that he no longer looked upon the abominations of the Heathen as offensive to the dignity of religion ; and that he was prepared to commute, bend, or compromise, the faith of his fathers, at the first call made upon him by convenience, policy, or the passions. It is remarkable, that the prevalence of the habit, though it must have involved many of the people finally in the crime of the idol worshippers, yet seems to have at no time brought the worship formally into Judah. The Divine inflictions fell on them, not for idolatry, but evidently for their gross disregard of the noble privilege exclusively conferred upon their nation ; for their venal insensibility to the matchless value of the gift ; and for the sensual and worldly neglect with which they exposed to a polluted contact the sacred possession confided to them for the future regeneration of man.

But though the sweeping punishment was long deferred, strong indications of the Divine displeasure were given at an early period. Schism vexed the land. To the astonishment of the Jew, a rival Temple was seen rising on Mount Gerizim in Samaria, and a sect was there formed, inveterately hostile to Jerusalem. A third Temple subsequently rose in Alexandria, which the Jew of Sion treated with scorn, and which retaliated with defiance.

Large portions of the national church were thus lopped away ; while the vigour of the remainder was decaying into weak submission, or its spirit chilling into crude formality ; personal ambition began to mingle with its government, and even the temple was stained with the murder of the high priest. Still the horizon gave no sign of the thunders, that once would have instantly followed and avenged the violation.

In the history of Providence we are constantly struck with the exhaustless variety of means. No conjecture can fix the instruments with which it exercises either its justice or its mercy. The preservation is sometimes by the sudden summons of champions from the depths of society, those gifted sons of genius and fortune, who move like a guiding flame in front of the nation, and who at once shed splendour on its track, and consume and wither all before them. It is sometimes by breathing a sudden energy of feeling and generous interest into the surrounding nations, which had looked indolently on the sufferings of the state, and interpose only to snatch it from the scaffold. The punishments too are sometimes from nature, sometimes from man ; from the earthquake, from the hostile sword, from the suicidal hand of faction. The modes of imperial death have been as marked and various as the diseases of the human frame. The great Assyrian monarchy sinks by a slow complication of evils, which waste it down al-



most insensibly to the grave. Others, as if they had swallowed a draught of poison, perish by a sudden exasperation of the powers of life, giving a frenzied vigour to their few remaining hours, and then extinguishing them at a pang. The reliques of some are left to moulder before the human eye, like the skeleton of a malefactor for the moral of his crimes. Others, like the Macedonian empire, are torn asunder on the field, to gorge the wolves of war. The Persian dies, like a monarch slain on his throne, in his royal robes, in the midst of his hereditary pomp, and slain by the single blow of a daring adversary. The Roman dies, like a gladiator in the arena, brought out despairingly to fight against wild beasts, or men as wild, until he is worn down by successive combats, and bleeds away life amid the roar of barbarians.

But no conjecture has ever been empowered to anticipate the form of the weapon with which the national death is to be given. A cloud rests on the Divine operation. No eye of man, or perhaps of beings higher than man, has seen the growing shape, in which vengeance finally comes forth to the world.

Of all nations, Greece was the last to which conjecture could have looked for the good or evil of Judæa. Near as their position was, the strong diversities of circumstance and character had fixed them half the globe asunder. No conceivable distinction could be more total, than that

between the proud austerity of the Jew, and the flexible elegance and restless sportiveness of the Greek; between the habits of the man who scorned commerce, and the universal wanderer of the seas; and, above all, between the solemn worshipper of the majesty of Jehovah in his single temple, and the festive, loose, and luxurious offerer of incense to a thousand Deities, on a thousand hills—the idolator of nature.

The Heathen intercourse, against which the restorers of Judah had protested, down to the tomb; began to produce its natural effects, within a few years. Nothing could be less startling, or more insidious, than the advances of the temptation. By a singular coincidence with the earliest of human trials, the actual temptation was knowledge. The Jew, to whom all the other “fruits of the garden” had been given in munificent possession, suddenly and strangely began to covet this distempered and distempering source of evil. Yet the religion of the chosen people had not shut them out from any portion of human acquirement, which belonged to the elevation and purity of the mind. No illiberal love of ignorance could have been prescribed among the subjects of the great king “who spake of trees, from the cedar that is in Lebanon, even to the hyssop that springeth out of the wall;” and who “spake also of beasts, and of fowls, of creeping things, and fishes;” who conversed with the elements and the

stars ; who searched the channels and recesses of the human heart, until he sat as a living oracle to the East, and “there came of all people to hear the wisdom of Solomon from all kings of the earth <sup>1</sup> ;” who filled the temple-service with the sublimest poetry ; of whom the sages of his country, with exulting reverence, pronounced that “He was a flood filled with understanding, that his soul covered the earth, and that he filled it with dark parables <sup>2</sup> ;” to whose court all the learned of the Orientals came with presents, “to hear his wisdom <sup>3</sup> ;” of whom the Deity himself declared—“I have given thee a wise and understanding heart <sup>4</sup> ;” and who has bequeathed to the last posterity an evidence of himself, in those lofty and eloquent, though melancholy, maxims, the gathered wisdom of a life of thought, which throw all the philosophy of Paganism into the shade <sup>5</sup>.

<sup>1</sup> 1 Kings iv. 34.

<sup>2</sup> Eccles. xlvii. 14, 15.

<sup>3</sup> 1 Kings x. 24.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid. iii. 12.

<sup>6</sup> The traditions of the magical power of Solomon, still extant in the East, are well known. But they have evidently had an earlier source than the fancy of the Arabians under the Caliphate, to whom Europe owes so many picturesque and dazzling fictions. Those traditions were prevalent among the Jews long before the fall of Jerusalem, and were probably the result of that unhappy mixture of Greek philosophy with the Scriptures, which was the last corruption of Judæism, and the first of Christianity. Josephus (*Antiq. s. viii.*) states the attempt of a Jew, in the presence of Vespasian, to exorcise demons by a talisman containing the name of Solomon.

The settlement of the Jews on the Nile, which seems to have commenced shortly after the captivity, had infected them with the fantasies of Egypt. The land of the transmigration of souls, and the perpetuity of the dead; in which every man sat surrounded by his ancestors in their shrouds, and even every banquet had its crowned skeleton, to remind the feasters that they were but passing to the tomb; the land of embalmment, cavern-temples, and catacombs; where the climate breathed aridity and abstraction, and the mind was stifled with the clouds of Indian mysticism; must have, at length, made its impress on the mind of the settlers. Their intercourse with their brethren in Palestine naturally communicated those errors; the fatal intermarriages had there already broken down the sacred horror of heathenism, which was the national rampart against its corruptions: and the sullen and perverting traditions of the Egyptian mythology began to steal upon the follower of the Law. But another trial was to come. If Satan ever took the shape of an angel of light, it was then. Instead of the simple and formal shape of Oriental or African mysticism, the deceiver was now one of matchless allure-ment.

The erection of Egypt into a kingdom by the Ptolemies, had thrown it open to the whole literature and philosophy of the West. Greece was the deceiver. Her customs, more elegant, yet not

less licentious, than those of the East ; her brilliant voluptuousness, and her subtle, yet bewildering, science, rendered her irresistible by the loosely guarded, and already half-seduced, spirit of the Jew. Pleasure assuming the stateliness of philosophy, and philosophy assuming the grace of pleasure, were the true idols of the Greek : and while he bowed alike before Jove and Venus, he worshipped the genius of enjoyment alone. The Jew sank beneath the temptation, and was undone.

We are too imperfectly furnished with the details of the period, to be able to trace, step by step, the progress of this extraordinary secession from the principles of the national faith. Yet are we to lament that it has been forbidden to us to see the successive stabs which drained the heart's blood of the most illustrious of all nations ; or to remove that providential mantle of time and darkness, which hides its dishonour from the scoffs and contumelies of the infidel ? But whatever were the progress, the end is fully known. A strange thirst of foreign customs and distinctions suddenly fevered the body of the people. Greece became the universal model. Yet not in her actual idolatry : for though individuals fell away, the majority of the nation seem never to have abjured the national altar. At length the evil brought its practical effect. The people,

corrupted by the vices of the foreign armies, and dazzled by the pomps of the foreign princes, who made their profligate and showy transits through the land, sank into the grossnesses of heathen life. Multitudes abandoned the observance of the Temple worship; though they might not have adopted the Pagan rites in its room. Profligate ambition began to develop itself in the higher ranks. When every surrounding throne was contested by the sword, and when corruption and the dagger were the legitimate weapons of victory, it is not to be wondered at that the spectators should at last mingle in the conflict, and display their knowledge of the principles by their share in the crimes. Blood began to be spilled in the factions of Jerusalem. The Circe, which had only fascinated their imaginations, now domineered over their appetites. The enchantress was now the tyrant. Greece, abandoning her seductions, stood before the nation a merciless and sanguinary figure, brandishing the scourge over the criminals in whom her cup had extinguished the lineaments of human nature. The people, sunk in national degradation, and wasted with universal misery by the wars of Syria and Egypt, of which their unhappy country was the constant field, were at length compelled to adopt the habits which they had once so guiltily tolerated. They had once

envied the Greeks their games ; numbers of the Jewish youth had felt themselves scandalized by the initiatory rite of their religion ; the painted and theatric attractions of the Greek altar had been contrasted with the severe, though magnificent, formalities of the national worship ; every act of this guilty shame was successively avenged.

At length, Joshua, the brother of Onias, the high priest, lighted the pile which Judah had been so long gathering with her own hands. Ambitious of his brother's office, he intrigued against him ; expelled him, and robed in the garb of holiness, commenced his career of iniquity. Having purchased his office with a vast sum sent to the Syrian court, what he had obtained by one act of corruption he determined to secure by another. His bribe to power was followed by a fatal bribe to popularity. He openly made Greece his standard, changed his name from that of the most honoured leader of Israel, after Moses, to that of the hero of fable, from Joshua to Jason ; built a theatre for Greek games ; and countenanced every innovation of the idolator.

Public corruption was now irrestrainable ; the law was scorned ; the temple service openly neglected ; the priests' offices were set up for sale. The horror of the faithful few who still remembered the covenant, was to be further raised by the apostate's sending an avowed and formal

contribution to the shrine of the Tyrian Hercules !  
Nothing could be done to increase the horror, but  
the planting of the Olympian Jove in the temple ;  
and it was done. But vengeance dire and awful  
was at hand.



## CHAPTER XXXVI.

### THE GREEK LANGUAGE.

No feature is more distinguishable in the history of Judæa, than the frequent presence of some signal effort of Heaven to awake her on the eve of punishment, or to counteract the results of her crime for the benefit of mankind. The time was drawing nigh when Judah was to feel heavy retribution. But in the long and desperate sufferings through which she was to pass to her final hour, the Scriptures, of which she was the sole depositary, might be exposed to the hazard of extinction. The savage Syrian or profligate Greek, the hosts of licentious mercenaries who were yet to make a prey of the land, or the tyrannical sovereigns who were to load it with chains, must be but contemptuous preservers of her religion. It was the will of Providence that the sacred volume should now be taken from the exclusive keeping of the Jew, and committed to the keeping of the world. Yet the widest diffusion of the Hebrew copies could not

have accomplished this diffusion of their knowledge.

The language had received a death-blow by the captivity ; the Chaldee had become the popular substitute. The Syriac, the language of those powerful dynasties with which Judah was to hold such long and anxious connection, finally superseded the Chaldee. Thus the Hebrew perished without hope of revival. Its study was thenceforth limited to the priesthood and the learned. Thus the nation was successively divested of all that formed its superiority ; the ship was going down, and the mariners flung their treasures overboard, until they followed them ; or, like captives on the field, they surrendered their successive ornaments, until they could surrender nothing but what left them naked, and undistinguishable from the other sufferers and slaves of misfortune. For the jargon of barbarians we can have no feeling. Every extinction of the dialects of savages by the invasion of a more civilized tongue, is an advance of mankind. It is a rescue of so much of the productive soil from weedy entanglement and noxious fertility. No boldness of tradition, no stamp of national character, no casual grace of language, can retrieve them ; more than the chance aspirings of the weed, or the passing fragrance of its bloom, can forbid the hand of extirpation. But we feel differently when we look upon the national fall of a great language, like the Hebrew. We

may well regret, that among the trivial, meagre, and common-place crowd of dialects that still make Europe a Babel, we cannot see the hoary majesty of the language of inspiration raising its honoured head from the dust, moving in its native grandeur above the multitude, and with the voice, reminding us of the times, of Jewish glory and virtue. Or, if this renewal be unfitted for our day ; if the songs of Sion are not to be sung beside the waters of Babylon ; and we are never to hear the rich and holy harmonies of Isaiah, the tones that wept from Jeremiah's harp, or the stormy supremacy, the swell of wrath, terror, and wonder, that Ezekiel struck from his string, as if it were swept by the whirlwind, and made living by the lightnings ; must we not hope that this extinction is not to be final ? that in times when the guilt of Judah shall be purified, this last vestige of the chain shall be cleared away ? that when she shall cease to be the dweller in all lands, and the denizen of none ; with a fixed home she may have a fixed language ? that the great ancestral tongue shall be loosed, by the same miracle which breaks down her prison gates ? that the Oracle of her fathers shall lie in its ruins no more ; that the fount which, like the rock struck by Moses, had poured out the living waters for the first wanderers of the wilderness, shall not be dry for ever, or lie out of the track of human life ; but shall stream again in the days when “ the wilderness shall blossom as

the rose?" that with the return of the golden days of Paradise, the language of Paradise shall live once more<sup>1</sup>.

<sup>1</sup> The claim of the "Original Language" admits of no doubt; if every feature of originality combined can give the distinction to the Hebrew. Sir William Jones (*Dissert. of the Asiat. S.*) supposes the first language to have been lost, and to have branched out into three dialects, correspondent to the three sons of Noah. But for this we have no historical testimony; and against it we have the facts—that in Hebrew are written the two oldest books in the world, Job and the Pentateuch;—that the Hebrew names of animals are strikingly descriptive, which nearly proves that they were unborrowed;—that the names of places are also strikingly descriptive;—by a stronger evidence still, that the names of nearly all the nations of the ancient world were distinctly drawn from the Hebrew, as the names of the sons of Noah and their immediate posterity; the Ionians from Javan; Assyrians from Asshur; Medians from Medai; Cimmerians from Gomer, &c.; the names of the great settlers, thus Japetus from Japhet; Hammon from Ham. The names of their gods—Jove from Jehovah; Vulcan from Tubalcain.—*Walton. Proleg. 3.—Sharpe on Orig. of Language, &c.*

By a still stronger evidence, the names of the post-diluvian patriarchs are *expressive* and *predictive* in Hebrew, which they are not in any other language (except in *some* instances of the Arabic—a language which is itself supposed to have been carried from the first settlements of the Noachidæ into Arabia by Joktan). We thus ascend to the Deluge; but we have the same reason for supposing that the language of Noah was that of his ancestors; viz. that the names of the ante-diluvians, of both the lines of Seth and Cain, are *expressive* and *predictive*, each actually containing a series of prophecies applicable in no other language, and thus identifying it with the original dialect of mankind, the language of Paradise.

But if the study of the Scriptures was on the point of perishing in their native land, what hope could exist of its adoption in the West? The European mind was fully occupied with its own impulses. While a succession of the finest order of intellects exhibited their powers, as in a perpetual amphitheatre ; with Greece, or mankind, for their witnesses ; was it conceivable that the spectators of those splendid and animating games would turn their eyes to the empty arena of Palestine, to trophies deserted by their own champions, the obsolete triumphs of a decaying people? The idiom of the Oriental tongues involved difficulties which have always peculiarly baffled the skill of the West ; for nothing less can account for the extraordinary rareness of Oriental allusions in classic literature<sup>1</sup>. There was no deficiency of intercourse ; the Greek traded actively with Egypt ; fought gallantly and often in Asia Minor ; and intrigued, with the indefatigable corruption of his nature, at the court of the “ great king.” Yet neither his polity, laws, nor religion, reflect more than the most transient image of the East. Even his poetry, which so delighted to catch every hue of art and nature, and fix them in those forms of grace and essential beauty which even in their fragments vindicate Greece in her grave ; owes but

<sup>1</sup> A view of the “ Connection ” of sacred literature with the classics is due to the present Bishop of Bristol ; a performance at once elegant and learned.

little to the East. Yet what noble resources were thus neglected ; what a fount was ready in Judæa to pour forth its golden-sanded stream ; what a treasure of soaring thoughts, divine dreams, and burning visions, was there waiting for his touch ; what a blaze of supernatural glory would have flashed on his eye at the first opening of the portals of Sacred Song !

The question of the language into which the Scriptures should be transferred ; a question which half a century before would have been one of extreme doubt, was now capable of decision at once. The conquests of Alexander within that period had spread the Grecian tongue from the Propontis to the Euphrates, and from the Euphrates to the Nile. The language, hitherto but slightly known beyond the borders of the Mediterranean, was carried with the Macedonian banners to the heart of Asia. Greek had become the universal dialect of the crowd of courts which started up out of the fragments of that vast and brilliant empire, all adopting its model, like buildings fashioned out of the ruins of some colossal palace, overthrown by an earthquake. From the language of the courts it naturally became the language of the whole circle of delegated authority, generals, governors, magistrates, and chiefs of colonies. Transmitted into Greek, the Scriptures thus received an extent which placed them beyond the chances of nations, a publicity which opened them to every people of

the civilized world, and a duration connected with the existence of a language which will last, while man has feeling or memory for the richest expression of the uninspired mind.

A glance at the history of the Greek language might form no feeble illustration of the successive aspects impressed on a national speech—by the influx of new tribes—by the locality of the settlers—by colonization—by foreign intercourse—by change of government—and, lastly, by national decay.

So far as we can trace the form of a people, through the clouds which cover the earlier ages of all heathenism, the Pelasgi, whose name exhibits their connexion with the patriarch of the division, a branch of the great emigration from Asia, were the first who settled in the west. Their Asiatic tongue accounts for the remaining resemblances of Greek to the general Shemitic languages. But a new invasion, also from the East, the Hellenistic, scattered the ancient settlers, confused their language, and founded the peculiar dialect which was to become so renowned.

The locality next divided the language. The mountaineers of the Pindus spoke with the rough intonation, which characterizes the speech of the districts of storm and sterility in every region of

the globe. Their descendants, gradually spreading over the plains at their feet, spoke their language with a softened inflection. The settlers on the sea-shore, enjoying a still more genial climate, a softer country, and a more animating and productive intercourse with the world, rapidly made themselves masters of a language polished, dextrous, and expressive, to the highest degree of national cultivation. Thus seem to have been successively formed the Doric, the Æolic, and the Attic. A fourth shape was given to this fine and flexible speech, directly resulting from location. The Greeks of Asia Minor had, with national taste, planted their settlements in the most delicious territory of the world; the highway of the richest commerce; the garden of the East, and abundant in all the sources of national happiness and fame. Their dialect bears characteristic richness, grace, and grandeur. Ionia was the parent of the earliest and the most commanding Greek literature. The country, or the school, of Thales, Hesiod, Herodotus, Alcæus, and Sappho; it has left a still loftier monument in the genius of the Iliad, the perfection of human power.

Colonization had borne the Pelasgic into Italy, and there showed its force, in transmuting the ancient Shemitic tongue by a mixture of the Etruscan, and other dialects of Central Italy, into the Latin. Such, at least, is the conjecture.



In later ages the Roman arms carried the Latin back into Greece, and filled the country with the harsh phrase of its government and manners.

The erection of the Byzantine Empire produced another, and still more formidable, change. A Thracian Court, with a policy more Asiatic than European, fond of strange ceremonial, involved in the controversies of a new religion, guarded by barbarian troops, perpetually shaken by barbarian invasion, and crowded with chieftains and ambassadors from the limits of the barbarian world; must have soon vitiated the integrity of the national speech. That ominous connexion of the fall of a national literature with the fall of the country, which seems to be among the prescribed warnings of ruin, was fully exemplified. The popular dialect of Constantinople had degraded the shape and colours of the original language, long before the Turk was summoned to do judgment on the gorgeous eastern adulteress, the purple-robed and jewel-crowned drinker of the blood of the saints; and extinguishing her idolatries with the sword, plant the two-fold abomination of desolation, his homicidal standard, and his savage jargon, on her grave.

Another change was to exhibit the influence of time and decay. With some analogy to the fate of extended empire, the language, forced to recede from its Asiatic borders, was now to struggle for existence at home. Norman pirates, French

and Venetian crusaders of the thirteenth century, followed by the desultory, but ruinous, havoc of a war of adventurers, Frankish counts, and Bulgarian and Albanian chiefs of banditti, prostrated the spirit of the land. In the usual circumstances of nations, the language, with all its fine and powerful adaptations to the most delicate and dexterous exigencies of the mind, must have perished. But it had laid up, in its ancient literature, a matchless source of revival. A lamp burned in the sepulchre, which was yet to rekindle the flame on the altar. The fugitives from the ruin of the Greek empire, had carried away their gods through the conflagration, to found a new worship in a more favoured land. The imperishable treasures of feeling and thought, which living Greece had neither the power, nor perhaps the will, to use; were sent through every region of Europe, to purchase a noble sympathy among the virtuous and the free, for the unhappy clientship that was then lingering in the Turkish chain; and to prepare, in the bosom of universal scholarship, that generous alliance, which has unquestionably done more to sustain the Grecian cause, than all the policy of governments; and which still looks with an unsubdued and inalienable interest to the progress of Greece in wise freedom, manly knowledge, and purified religion. In the conduct of that cause, there may have been human passion or human error; but, from the

first, it has been, beyond all denial, the cause of mankind. Its triumphs have been for all. Philosophy and Christianity alike have seen in them the first recess of the flood of barbarism; the first dawn on the edge of a sky that shall yet shower light upon all kingdoms; the first lifting of a trumpet that shall yet break up the sleep of the great Asiatic tomb. More than the vanities of earthly victory are in the advance of Greece to empire. The first shout that tells us of the planting of the cross on the ramparts of Constantinople, should be echoed by every nation of the world.

B. C. 285.—The translation of the Scriptures into Greek, was begun about the third year of the 123d Olympiad. The narratives of its origin are contradictory, and scarcely worth reconciling. The name of the *Septuagint* is indifferently referred to the number of the translators, the time occupied in the translation, and the sanction of the Sanhedrin; its first conception alike to the zeal of the Alexandrian Jews, the command of their Sanhedrin, and the curiosity of their king. The statement received in the time of Josephus was, that Ptolemy Philadelphus, desirous of possessing a translation of the Hebrew Scriptures for his celebrated library at Alexandria; sent Aristas and Andreas<sup>1</sup>, two persons of rank, on a

<sup>1</sup> The letter in which Aristas gives this account, was a subject of violent discussion in the early part of the last century

formal mission to Eleazer, the Jewish High Priest, to obtain an authentic copy of the Sacred Volume; that the persons appointed to make the translation were placed in the Island of Pharos for greater seclusion; and that the several translators, after submitting their portions to mutual criticism, delivered them over to Demetrius Phalereus, the king's librarian, by whom, or by whose order, they were copied, and put together. The fables fastened on this statement by the Alexandrian Jews; the incredible seclusion, miraculous correctness, and direct inspiration, of the translators, are not entitled to impair the authority of this great performance. It is perfectly natural, that an opulent and accomplished sovereign, confessedly employing his taste and treasures in the cultivation of literature, and who prided himself in adorning Alexandria with the most memorable libraries of ancient times, should have wished to possess, even as a literary curiosity, the book of the laws, history, and poetry of a nation, lying on his borders. But the circumstance, that a

and close of the preceding. Hody, in his work *De Bibl. Græc. Textibus*, was the chief assailant. The learned Walton was the protector of the Egyptian envoy's fair fame. Numbers at last prevailed, and the letter was pronounced a forgery. Yet this needs not impair the original facts, which seem to have been familiar to the Jewish nation; who certainly acknowledged the work with joy, and never rejected it, until it had first rejected them.

large body of that nation were living under his government, would be sufficient to make the possession of the Pentateuch a matter of public necessity. There must have been constant appeals by the Jews to their Law, in their common transactions with the people and government; and those appeals could not be answered but by reference to an authority recognized by both parties.

A translation of the Law into Greek, from a copy authenticated by the high priest, and executed by Jews on the spot, would form an indisputable standard. And in conformity to this idea, we find that the Pentateuch *alone* was translated in the first instance, and by the royal desire. The other books followed, chiefly at long intervals, and in other reigns. Esther, the Psalms, and the Prophets in general, were not translated till a century after. The version of the Pentateuch was also evidently made by Egyptian Jews, from the number of its Coptic words and idioms. But those are the husks and triflings of the question. The important matters are, that the Septuagint was received as an authority nearly, if not altogether, on a level with the original, from the time of its first appearance; that it was read by the foreign Jew in the synagogue, and by the Christian in the church; that it was evidently quoted in many instances by our Lord; was unequivocally adopted by the fathers; and was the parent of all

the principal translations into other tongues, Arabic, Armenian, Ethiopic, Gothic, Latin, &c.

But the epoch of this translation was striking. It was in the exact interval between the completion of the Jewish Canon by the prophecies of Malachi, and the long series of Jewish desolations which began with Epiphanes. It was thus sufficiently late to contain the entire canon, and sufficiently early to escape a time of Jewish confusion, which might have altogether extinguished the design <sup>1</sup>.

<sup>1</sup> The literary history of the Septuagint is given with learned fidelity by Holmes, in the Introduction to his edition of the Septuagint. The *fac simile* of the Alexandrian MSS. begun by Woide, has been lately completed in a publication, of remarkable skill and beauty, by the Rev. H. II. Baber.

## CHAPTER XXXVII.

### THE SYRIAN WARS.

ONE of the great changes of the world was now come. The habitual profligacy of all Paganism, and the general oppression of the chosen people, had hurried on the ruin of the mighty Persian empire. Daniel, two hundred years before<sup>1</sup>, had seen the vision of the he-goat and the ram<sup>2</sup>, the emblem of the Macedonian invasion, that was to “run swiftly, scarce touching the ground,” and of the broken strength of the Mede and Persian dynasty.

No prophecy was ever more amply fulfilled. The “notable horn between the eyes of the goat,” the fiery chieftain who was summoned from

<sup>1</sup> B.C. 558.

<sup>2</sup> The goat was the Macedonian ensign, from the old legend, of the march of Caramus, the founder of the monarchy, being directed by a flock of goats. (Justin. l. vii.) The ram was the Persian ensign. It is still seen, with unequal horns, among the sculptures at Persepolis; the lower horn for the Medes, the higher for the Persians. (Ammian. Marcel. l. xix. quoted by Hales.)

beyond the Hellespont to execute the Divine vengeance, in two years laid the Persian monarchy even with the ground ; and, like the instruments of wrath, was himself cast away when his work was done. The empire of this most resistless soldier, and splendid devastator, that the ancient world ever saw, perished still more rapidly than it rose : reared by ambition and blood, it fell in fragments on his grave<sup>1</sup>.

But, as if the whole vast revolution had been planned with a distinct view to the punishment of Judah, Palestine from that hour became the seat of the most ruinous and incessant wars. Of the four dynasties which divided the power of Alexander, the two most ambitious, subtle, and sanguinary, were the Ptolemies and the Seleucidæ, the Sovereigns of Egypt and Syria ; and those were the devastators let loose upon Palestine. While the hostilities of the other dividers of the Macedonian Empire languished, or ceased altogether, the two royal tigers of the north and south never relaxed their thirst of each other's blood. They were perpetually either in the act to spring, or fastening on each other with tooth and talon ; or, if baffled, Judah lay in their path homeward, and on her they furiously sated their revenge.

But she had deserved it all. The gradual



corruption of her people had been brought to its crisis, by the audacious guilt of the High Priest, Jason. The thunderbolt so long suspended, then fell. Within five years from that profanation, Antiochus Epiphanes stormed Jerusalem; then ensued a havoc which was to be unequalled, till the final desolation. Multitudes were instantly butchered, multitudes swept into returnless slavery. Within three years the massacre was renewed, but with the still deeper national pang of the spoil and profanation of the temple. At length, an idol was erected on the altar of Jehovah! In this visitation on the vanity and love of change, which had made the Jew, for a century before, cling to the habits and morals of the foreigner, it would be almost possible to trace, step by step, and blow by blow, the judicial vengeance that scourged out his criminality at last. His false shame of the rites of Judæism was punished, by a command that none should be performed under pain of death; his frivolous propensity to the Greek games, by forced and humiliating displays for the sport of his Syrian masters; and his neglect of the temple, by a blood-thirsty edict, that every Jew should offer incense to the gods of Paganism; an edict which stung the nation to the soul. For, by one of the extraordinary anomalies of this most singular people, while they largely fell into the crimes and follies of the stranger, they scorned his worship;

and while they left the priest of Jehovah to administer to empty courts, and suffered the flame on his altar to sink unfed ; they had fixed every feeling of pride which remained in their bosoms, on the sacred superiority of the temple. The pollution of that temple by an idol sacrifice was the final blow. None could now lift their eyes to Sion, without a consciousness of shame. Tyranny had long wound its enormous folds round them, and crushed the popular strength ; but now it struck in the sting.

But those events strongly illustrate the correspondence between the providential order of the Ante-diluvian and the Jewish lines. The intermarriages of the sons of Seth with the Cainites, had been followed by the sudden supremacy of violence ; the land was ravaged by furious leaders, giants in evil. The intermarriages of the Jews with the heathen, a similar crime, were visited with a perfect similarity of punishment. The East became a scene of the most furious wars ; and their concentrated rage fell on Palestine. From the division of the Macedonian empire to the reign of Herod, Jerusalem was captured *six* times by foreign armies. Vast hordes of the East and South, Arabians, Syrians, Egyptians, and savages, alike from Scythia and Africa, covered the land with carnage and misery for the fearful duration of *two hundred years*<sup>1</sup>. Her permanent torturers

<sup>1</sup> From B. C. 320, to B. C. 37.

were the dynasties of Syria and Egypt, men of renown, superb sovereigns, but bloody destroyers : knowing no law but force ; of immense power ; giants in evil.

The personal history of the Syrian and Egyptian monarchies is one of the darkest pages of man. It had all the violence of barbarism, but of barbarism armed and envenomed with all the skill and subtlety of civilization. With some flashes of heroic gallantry, and royal munificence, all the rest was ferocity and fraud. Ambition was the only impulse : the universal result was gore shed in torrents ; the rapid change of dominion from hand to hand ; domestic treachery performing tragedies of horror in every palace ; hideous feuds rousing the populace of the cities into indiscriminate vengeance ; kings, and chiefs of high military name, meeting in perpetual collision, and leaving behind nothing but famine and death : Judæa the field of battle of them all.

The national historian describes this dreadful era with simple but strong expression. “ The Jews resembled a ship tossed by a hurricane, and buffeted on both sides by the waves, while they lay in the midst of contending seas <sup>1</sup>. ”

Still, the Church, though almost expiring, survived. The seven thousand who had not bowed the knee to Baal, were left ; the valour and suc-

<sup>1</sup> Josephus, *Antiq.* xii. 3.

cesses of the Maccabees vindicated the ancient faith, and not seldom recalled the memory of the days, when Heaven fought for the chosen people. But the national degeneracy was an antagonist more powerful than the Syrian sword and buckler. The supremacy of Judah was never to return. She was now to be given into the hand of that great empire, which was unconsciously to prepare the way for an empire, before whose existence all human dominion is but the creature of an hour. In the sixty-third year before the advent of our Lord, the Roman army under Pompey made Judæa tributary. The warning trumpet was now sounded for the great procession to begin, in which all the glories of Judah were successively to follow to the grave. In that grave the whole polity, power, and worship, of the land sleep at this moment; and shall sleep, until they are summoned again, in a convulsion, like that in which they went down; but shaking all nations, felt alike by the living and the dead, and regenerating the moral and physical constitution of the world.

## CHAPTER XXXVIII.

### CHRISTIANITY.

THE period from the accession of Herod the Great to the fall of Jerusalem, comprehends a hundred years, crowded with events of the most incalculable importance to mankind. The preparatives for the coming of our Lord ; the re-building of that temple which was thus to be more honoured than by the Glory from heaven ; the visions and predictions of those who looked for the great coming, day and night watching in the temple ; the solemn and startling denunciations of the Baptist ; the visible presence of the ETERNAL in the flesh ; His mission ; His power over nature, the human heart, and the Evil Spirit ; His death for human sin ; His rising again for human justification ; His visible ascent to the throne of Heaven ; the overwhelming miracle by which fortitude, knowledge, faith, and the power of communicating them all, were inspired into the peasants of Galilee ; form an unspeakable display of light

and wisdom, an illustration of Providence which, through all the clouds of time and things, still fixes the eye on that spot above, where the Sun of the Spirit shall break forth at last, and the full aspect of the heavens be shown to man.

The true conception of Christianity is, not that of a new religion, but of an old receiving a more perfect form ;—the seed planted in the day of Abraham ; shut up, but maturing, in the day of Judah ; and shooting above the earth in the day of Christ ;—the primal faith, buried in weakness, to be raised in power ; the body laid in the grave with the patriarchal dispensation ; the spirit existing, but separate and viewless, in the Mosaic ; the spirit and body re-united, with more vivid attributes, a nobler shape, and a perpetual existence, in the Christian.

The apostles continually declare this identity of principle with the religion of Abraham. They *claim* expressly under the Abrahamic covenant. St. Paul, alternately astonished at the dulness, and indignant at the prejudice, which could doubt that he himself was a champion of the true national religion, cries out, “ for the *hope of Israel* am I bound with this chain.” He unhesitatingly accounts for the reluctance of the Jews to adopt Christianity, not on the ground that they were wedded to the religion of Abraham, but that they had substituted another in its place ; and loftily denies their claim to the very title of

Israelite<sup>1</sup>, “All are not Israel that are of Israel.” Peter, like the preachers of righteousness in the days before the flood, warns the Jews of the ruin which is the inevitable consequence of their *apostasy* from the primal faith; and our Lord himself, in the most distinct, detailed, and impressive, declaration of Divine wrath ever given, first charges the people with revolt from the spirit of this faith; and then pronounces the coming of that deluge of fire and sword which was to extirpate the being of the nation, as the result of the crime<sup>2</sup>.

The deluge had overwhelmed alike the two divisions of mankind, the few and feeble Sethites, and the countless and powerful multitudes of

<sup>1</sup> Woe unto you Scribes and Pharisees; ye serpents, ye generation of vipers, how can you escape. Upon you shall come all the righteous blood shed upon the earth. All those things shall come upon this generation. (Matt. xxiii. 27, &c.) Then shall be great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world. (xxiv. 21.)

<sup>2</sup> It was evidently in a great degree from this view of Christianity, as a consummation of the church of Abraham, merely relieved from the restrictions of the Mosaic Law, (which were professedly temporary,) that the first disciples were so slow in comprehending their mission to the Gentiles. For this reason too, among others, the mission was first limited to the Jews, as peculiarly entitled to the first benefits of the religion of their ancestor in its active and improved state. Even the name of Christian was not known till A.D. 42, at Antioch, and even then was not chosen by the converts, but fastened on them by strangers.—(*Diss. by Wetstein. Kuinoel; Bloomfield's notes, &c.*)

Cain. The ruin which now fell on the Jew, was similarly to spread over the great empire of idolatry.

In the vision of Nebuchadnezzar, the history of human power had stood before him in the majestic form of an image of gold, silver, brass, and iron, of terrible aspect, gigantic size, and dazzling splendour. In the still more awful display of the Divine will, which our Lord gives in the parable of the last judgment, the principle of Providence in the government of the earth is declared to be the well-being of the church of God—"Forasmuch as ye did it not unto *these my brethren*, ye did it not unto me." The Babylonish, Persian, Macedonian, and Roman Empires, had exercised an unceasing influence on Judah, as invaders or sovereigns. Those successive powers constituted Civilization. Within, or touching their boundaries, was the world of literature, of the arts, politics, warlike science, and commercial activity. Beyond, was the circle of darkness, stagnant, squalid, and unknown; barbarism pining with famine, herding in swamps, freezing among snows and forests, or wandering over wildernesses of rock and sand, pursuing and pursued, slaying and being slain, distinguished from the wolf or the tiger by scarcely more than a subtler ferocity and more ravening love of blood. The four Empires formed the central channel of life to the earth: the spine, from which issued vividness and



sensitiveness to the general frame ; the meridian, to which all the lines of the chart of human progress must be referred. But, the work of the superb Oriental Empires was done : Judah had been successively chastised, restored, and trampled on by them all, and their agency, whether as protection or punishment, was no longer essential to the discipline of a state, whose days were numbered.

At the exact period when Christianity was to be given to the world, the Roman empire had received that form of government which most fully combined enterprize with solidity ; the daring energy of a republic with the broad and profound ambition of a monarchy. Like all the great leaders of mankind, the genius of the first Cæsar might stand for the representative of his empire. The unequalled union of the brilliant, the sagacious, and the bold, with the stately, the magnanimous, and the royal, which had rendered that memorable man, perhaps, the finest combination which the world has seen, of the finest qualities for establishing a sovereignty ; had inscribed its character upon every stone of his mighty building. The remark is old, and true, that the Roman arms were the levellers of the highway of Christianity. We are fully entitled to believe, that it was for the uses of a religion, yet to comprehend all nations, that the original empires were covered with the shadow of

the Roman eagle ; and the mandate of the Emperor touched the extreme points of civilization, from the Caucasus to Mauritania, and from the rising to the setting sun.

But there was to be a striking distinction in the religious fortunes of those empires. The first three were left to perish as they fell, broken idols, cast from their pedestals, and mouldering away by the common course of ruin. The fourth, was to cast off its Pagan nature, and be suddenly invested with the unsullied robe, and starry diadem, of Christianity.

The capture of Jerusalem by Titus, has been too hastily assumed as the final vengeance inflicted on the Jews. There, it is true, the irrecoverable blow was given ; there the veins were pierced, which must drop until life exuded from the national frame. But that frame still lingered on, if it were only to complete the full measure of its prophetic sufferings. The horrors of the siege still remain on record as the most overwhelming scene of history ; the last agonies of an unhappy people, roused to a resistance without hope, sustained only by the antipathies of national feeling ; and nerved only by the madness of misery and despair. It must have presented the spectacle, less of the daring and spirit-stirring encounter of men urged by glory or patriotism, than of a vast pit-full of wolves and lions, surrounded by hunters, and slaughtered without

mercy. Yet those horrors were only the exhaustion of a long-suffering, which had borne with an intractable nation for fifteen hundred years, and had at length cast it off, to be undone. But, unless we are to conceive the physical construction of the Jewish mind different from that of all other nations; or attribute to its trials, results, of which we have no example as the product of other national sufferings, we may well wonder at its tenacity of life and revenge. The loss of Jerusalem had stripped the nation of all that constitutes public existence. Government, Law, Revenue, Religion, the whole armour of the State, had been hacked from her, piece by piece. She had been not merely chained, every limb had been broken on the wheel. She had fallen, not like a warrior on the field; but, like a criminal, after wearying the scaffold, flung to be devoured by the birds and beasts of prey. Yet we see this dislocated being gathering up its limbs, and exacting terrible retaliation. The multitudes slain in the Jewish insurrections in Africa, Asia, and the Mediterranean shores, were beyond calculation. In the hurried conjecture of the time, there fell, in the insurrection of the African Pentapolis, 220,000 of the natives, and strangers frequenting that opulent and populous district. In Cyprus, the Jews destroyed 240,000. Roman justice too was proverbial for its severity, and Jewish blood was poured out in torrents. For

nearly a hundred years, the Roman sword was never wholly sheathed ; and still the gore continued to spout from the limbs of the indomitable slave.

While Jerusalem stood, the nation was immortal. At length the consummation came. The old deception, which had never failed to deceive, a false Messiah, was proclaimed to this ruined people. From the time when they had cast off their true King, judgment visited them in the shape of the most fatal reliance on imposture. The frenzied insurrection under Barchochebas, (A. D. 132.) closed the existence of Judah. The slaughter was unequalled, but by that of the siege : 580,000 fell in battle ; and a multitude, beyond all count, perished in the slower, but not less deadly, operations of famine, pestilence, nakedness, and sorrow. Yet the ruin was incomplete, until it was sealed by the profanation of Jerusalem. The work could not have fallen into more determined hands than those of the emperor. Hadrian did his appointed office with rigid hostility : he built a theatre with the stones of the Temple ; dedicated a temple to Jupiter on the spot where the altar of God had stood ; placed the figure of a swine on the city gates ; and, by an imperial edict, forbade all Jews, on pain of death, from setting foot within the city, for ever ! But the national ruin was to receive an additional stamp of Divine abandonment, scarcely less em-

phatic, if more obscure. The Christian Church of Jerusalem, divinely warned, had retired to Pella at the commencement of the siege. While Christianity, in Greece and Asia Minor, spread its freedom through large and powerful communities, the little Church at Pella still retained its adherence to some of the Mosaic rites, and its attachment to Jerusalem. It was the last link by which Providence still suffered its Church to be bound to the decayed commonwealth of Judah. Pella was the city of refuge, the last spot opened for the Jew flying from the avengers of his blood-guiltiness. But it was now to be closed. The Bishops of the Church had been always of the race of Abraham; on the fall of Barchochebas, they elected a Bishop from the Gentiles, renounced their Mosaic observances, and thus cut down the bridge between Judæism and Christianity for ever<sup>1</sup>. \*

<sup>1</sup> Euseb. L. iii.—Le Clerc. H. Eccl. Gibbon.

## CHAPTER XXXIX.

### PAGANISM.

THE Roman empire was now to perish. One of the high uses for which it was made, had been fulfilled in the extirpation of Judah. Its final use was the diffusion of Christianity. From the period of the Jewish overthrow, the fall of Rome began to be announced by those signs, which, carelessly regarded as they may be by the multitude, are proofs to the philosopher and the Christian. The empire was still resistless; 'the leviathan still threw the political ocean into tumult, and swept through the tempest with his accustomed command: but the ebb was inevitably come, and he must be laid dry upon the shore.

Within sixty-two years of the last pollution of Jerusalem, the accession of Commodus to the throne was the direct signal of convulsion. From this time, the personal vices and intolerable tyranny of the emperors kindling the passions of a people of slaves; every shape of lordly guilt, and popular profligacy, as if they had been raised

from a darker bed than of this world, stalked in daylight through the empire. The heart revolts from those scenes of the naked criminality of man. But they belong to the history of a popular mind, abandoned to the impulses of human nature. Half the empire was a dungeon, and half a theatre : life was divided between the misery of chains, and the madness of a Bacchanalian revel. And the punishment was as impartial as the criminality. If the people perished by famine or the sword, the monarch went down headless to the tomb. For fifty years, the throne was but a speedier passage to a felon's grave.

“ The reign of Commodus,” says the historian, “ was the signal of a revolution, to this day felt among the nations of the earth<sup>1</sup>.” Then began the supremacy of the dagger. The tyrant, after twelve years of bloodshed, was stabbed in his palace. His successor, Pertinax, after a reign of three months, was slain by his guards. The profligate sale of the empire to Julian followed. Three candidates for the diadem took the field against him, and against each other, at the head of the British, Syrian, and Pannonian legions. Julian was beheaded, after a reign of two months ; two of the candidates were defeated in pitched battles, and beheaded ; Caracalla, the son and

<sup>1</sup> Gibbon, vol. i.

successor of the third, assassinated his brother Geta, put 20,000 Romans to death, under pretence of conspiracies to avenge the fratricide ; and then, like his predecessors, died by the dagger. Heliogabalus, who followed him to the throne, followed him to the grave, by the swords of the Prætorians. Alexander Severus, his successor, was cut to pieces by a military insurrection.

While such were the shocks of the highest station of human existence, what must be the ravage of private life ? While diadems were tossed from hand to hand by a soldiery or a rabble, what must be the spoil of humbler distinctions ? While the palace of the Cæsars was the seat of desolation, what must be the misery of the cottage—what the hideous havoc of the provinces through which those vast armies, contemptuous of all rights but the sword, and proud of their faculty of giving thrones away, rushed to encounter each other ? Every struggle enfeebled the strength of the empire ; victory or defeat was alike national ruin. Every blow, from whatever side it came, alike clave away some portion of the old golden armour of the empire ; until, at last, the form stood naked, and the fatal discovery was made by the barbarians, that time had wrought its work even upon the colossal frame of the conqueror of the world.

Yet a still wilder era was at hand. From the middle of the third century, the confusion sud-



denly deepened. As if some new spirit of pestilence had been subtilized from the universal corruption, the empire was suddenly thrown into a violence of moral disorder that threatened instant dissolution ; the countenance of public life unaccountably blackened ; all government was anarchy ; all power was frenzy ; all ambition was perfidy, bloodshed, and rapine. But the direct instrument of the infliction, the tempest in which were combined all the elements of ruin, the “*torti fulminis iras*,” the whirlwind, the hail, and the fire, was war.

The old frontier contests had passed away ; the struggle was now within the bosom of the empire. As if another Alecto had put the trumpet to her lips, every province burst out into insurrection ; every legion looked upon itself as the arbiter of the throne. The Roman world was filled with rivals for supremacy ; illustrious, obscure, warlike, timid, men of every rank, and every order of mind ; but all alike committed in one great discordant league for the desolation of Roman grandeur. Maximin, the usurper of the throne of Severus, first let loose the sword against the senate and people ; he fell by the dagger. All thenceforth was indiscriminate rebellion. Six imperial rivals rose within as many months, and perished ; nineteen usurpers, at the head of armies, appeared *at once* in the field ; “and the election of those precarious emperors, their power,

and their death, were equally destructive<sup>1</sup>." The reign of Gallienus was one boundless insurrection. Five of those competitors rose in the East ; five in Gaul and the Western provinces ; three in the Illyrian and Thracian provinces ; one in Pontus, one in Isauria ; one in Thessaly ; one in Egypt ; and one in the African provinces. The whole circle of the empire was a circle of flame.

" Of the nineteen rivals who started up under the reign of Gallienus, history tells us that not one enjoyed a life of peace, or a natural death<sup>2</sup>." But their hurried seizure of authority, its anxious possession, and its precipitate loss, equally implied all the popular suffering involved in unsparing rapacity, cruel precaution, and ferocious massacre. Kings, raised from the camp to perish on the scaffold, must be untrue to the nature of fear and despotism, if they were not careless of blood in the passage.

This was Paganism, so often boasted of as the harmless, festive, and philosophic servant of civil rule ; yet half its evil was undisplayed, for its aspect as a persecutor was still comparatively covered under the disguises of imperial polity. This was Paganism among Pagans ; the tiger, not baring its talons to spring upon the victim thrown to it expressly to be torn ; but wantoning in the midst of its pamperers and masters.

<sup>1</sup> Gibbon, vol. i.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

Nor are we to fall into the error of conceiving that those horrors were an accidental burst of frenzy. Cruelty was an acknowledged principle ; and massacre a legalized form. The letter of the emperor Gallienus, on the suppression of the Illyrian rebellion, furnishes, and establishes, the policy of the reign.

“ It is not enough,” writes this depository of supreme law to his officer, “ that you *exterminate* such as have appeared in arms ; the chance of battle might have served me as effectually. The *males of every age must be extirpated*. Let every one die who has dropped an expression, who has entertained a thought against me. *Tear, kill, and hew in pieces*. I write to you with my own hand, and would *inspire you with my own feelings*<sup>1</sup>.”

In this war of the passions, the empire was hastening to destruction. The strength which the Romans had once regarded as much beyond casualty as the firmament above their heads, was shaken to its extremities. The sovereigns and leaders, whom by one of the most natural of all allusions, the mind designates as the suns and stars of the political heaven, the lights and guides of nations, were no sooner risen, than they were cast from their spheres ; all was darkness and change. To deepen the calamity, the barbarian

<sup>1</sup> Hist. Aug. 118. Gibbon v. 1.

nations, relieved from the pressure of the legions, assembled in new force, and, pouring over the frontier, revenged the long supremacy of Rome. Even the powers of nature, like the powers of empire, were now to be stirred into sudden disorder. "Inundations, earthquakes, uncommon meteors," increased the sufferings, or the terrors of the people. An unexampled famine followed, in part the work of nature, in part of the abandonment of labour, produced by the misery and the diminished numbers of the population. Still, as if no evil were to be spared to an empire which in the midst of all its horrors never forgot its bitterness to the name of Christian, a pestilence broke out, the longest and most terrible in human record. Continuing for fifteen years<sup>1</sup>, it covered the whole extent of the empire with corpses. "During some time *five thousand persons* died daily in Rome." It is estimated from documents of the public subsistence, "that war, pestilence, and famine thus consumed, within a few years, one half of the human species<sup>2</sup>."

The unquestionable result, if not the providential purpose, of those events, was to rend and dislocate the solid mass of the imperial power, preparatory to its fall. The barbarian tribes which were to be the instruments of the catastrophe, were by those wars accustomed to incursions on the

<sup>1</sup> From A.D. 250.

<sup>2</sup> Gibbon, vol. i.

Roman territory, and to the usage of Roman arms. Sometimes employed by the rival generals, and always eager spectators of their combats, they acquired a gradual knowledge of the resources, the skill, and the discipline of Rome. Alaric himself was a legionary ; the mace which broke down the gates of the empire was forged with Roman fire.

## CHAPTER XL.

### CONSTANTINE.

THIRTY years of comparative peace followed this convulsion ; but the empire had received an irreparable blow. The day of Christianity was come, and the tempests with which it opened were perhaps essential to invigorate its frame for the severer trials of prosperity. It had to suffer heavily, and to suffer long. Even the final persecution under Galerius was the most violent that the Church had ever known.

A sufficient reason for this suffering may be found in the schisms, which nothing but general terror could reconcile ; and in the existing temptations of Paganism, against which nothing could guard the converts but their experience of its cruelties.

At last, the discipline was closed ; and the deliverance began. The dawn broke from the West. The famous Constantine, the son of the Roman governor of Britain, who had been the steady protector of the Christians ; (as if our country was,

in every age, to be the birth-place or the refuge of religion,) raised his standard against Maxentius, the usurper of the Roman throne. Breaking through the armies which met him on his descent from the Alps, he marched to find his rival, and rushed onward until he saw the army of Maxentius drawn up before the gates of Rome. On that day one of the most memorable changes of earth, arising out of one of the most striking interpositions of Heaven, stamped the character of the army, the victor, and the empire.

Constantine had crossed the Alps with but 40,000 men; Maxentius was at the head of an army of 175,000 foot, and 18,000 horse. The force which now covered Rome was of appalling superiority. Constantine was the first soldier of his age, yet even his undaunted courage might well have pondered on the chances of the morrow. But he had a hidden source of anxiety, which in the later ages of Rome haunted the most powerful minds; Maxentius was believed to have strengthened his arms by magic. The spirits that disposed of thrones at the command of the magician, were still more appalling than the armed multitudes of the warrior.

In the simple, but most striking, narrative which Eusebius gives, from the lips of Constantine himself, long after he was master of the world, and had neither rivalry to dread nor feeling to disguise, we are told that, on the day before the

battle, “ thinking that he had need of force superior to that of arms to surmount the magic arts of Maxentius, he first looked to the gods. But he then began to reflect, that those emperors who had relied on the multitude of gods had come to an evil end, and had been deceived by their oracles ; while his father Constantius, who during his whole life had honoured One Sovereign God, had received evident marks of his protection. He now considered, that it was a folly to honour gods which were nothing, and that he ought to worship only the God of his father. He then invoked Him, praying fervently that he would make himself known, and help him. While he was praying, he saw an extraordinary sign ; and such as, if any other person had told him of it, he would scarcely have believed. But I,” says Eusebius, “ who write this history, and heard the emperor himself, long after, when I had the honour of familiarly conversing with him, tell this, and with an oath, how can I refuse it credit ? A little after the hour of noon, and while the sun was almost in mid-heaven, he saw on the surface of that body a cross, resplendent with light, with the inscription, ‘ *By this conquer !* ’ which gave him great surprise, as well as the soldiers who were on the march with him, and who also were its witnesses <sup>1</sup>. ”

The “ *Sign of the Son of Man*, ” the cross, the peculiar emblem of Christianity, had thus been

<sup>1</sup> Vita Const.



shown to Constantine under circumstances of the most conspicuous and convincing nature. But, though habitually disposed by his father's example to respect Christianity, he was not yet a Christian. In a vision, that night, the form of our Lord appeared to him, commanding him to inscribe the shields of his army with the "*celestial sign of God*," the cross. The command was obeyed; the sign was adopted, and the troops, with the cross on their shields, marched to the attack of Maxentius, and drove his enormous host from the field. In their retreat to Rome by the Milvian bridge, Maxentius was forced into the Tiber by the flying multitude, and drowned. The Cross, from this period, became the universal sign of the troops of Constantine. "The Cross glittered on their helmets, it was engraved on their shields, it was interwoven into their banners."—The emperor ordered that the Cross should form the principal standard of the army. This standard, named the *Labarum*, was "a long pike intersected by a transversal beam. The silken veil which hung down from the beam, was curiously inwrought with the images of the reigning monarch and his children. The summit of the pike supported a crown of gold which enclosed the monogram, at once expressive of the figure of the Cross, and of the initial letters of the name of Christ<sup>1</sup>."

<sup>1</sup> Gibbon, v. 2.

## CHAPTER XLI.

### THE VISION OF CONSTANTINE.

THE interest of a subject which has occupied the most learned pens of Europe, might justify a longer discussion than can be indulged in these pages. It can be here adverted to scarcely more than as one of the instances of that culpable and dangerous compliance, which belonged to a decaying age of theological vigour. We have in it the example of an unquestionable fact, of the first importance as a feature of history, the seal of one of the greatest transactions of the world, and the direct subject of prophecy, sacrificed to a sneer; the work of inveterate infidelity done by spurious moderation.

On the revival of religion in the sixteenth century, the character of the monkish miracles had thrown a shade over all miracle; and the vision of the Cross, strongly upheld by the Papal writers as a plea for the prevalent homage to the Crucifix, became a subject of close inquiry.

Jaques Godefroy, of Geneva, in an edition of

Philostorgus, in 1642, compiled the objections ; which, however, were found to amount only to the discrepancies of the various narratives. The feebleness of this species of argument was easily exposed, and the topic became a general trial of skill among the learned. At length the world grew weary of this verbal contest ; the novelty was gone, and the fact was left, unshaken and neglected, until the close of the last century. Gibbon then came, the disciple of French infidelity, to embody the scepticism of all ages and his own, in that history, which gives so strong an evidence of the bitter prejudices that may render learning worthless, sagacity a dupe, and the vigour of highly cultivated ability only the vigour of infatuation. Connected as the vision of the Cross was with Christianity, it naturally became an object of his spleen. Some hostility might have been expected from an avowed infidel ; but Gibbon's practices on this occasion are actually disingenuous and pitiful in the extreme. He exhibits, throughout, a palpable consciousness that the evidence is too strong for him, and an equally palpable determination to swindle the reader into disbelief, if he can. He begins circuitously, by a general insinuation of the liability of the human senses to be deceived, and the tendency of all narrators to exaggerate. He then proceeds to prove the improbability of the narrative—by taking every step of his argument for granted ; he first

*supposes* all miracle to be artifice ; he then *supposes* Constantine to have been an impostor, “ whoknew the advantage of appealing to the superstitions of his troops.” (The superstitions of a Pagan army, in the midst of a Pagan empire, in favour of Christianity !) He then *supposes* the majority of the army to have been Christians, or Germans, whom he equally *supposes* to have cared nothing about the matter. He then contradictorily *supposes* Constantine *not* to have been an impostor, but a dupe and an enthusiast ; and finally *supposes* the whole narrative to have been the “ elegant invention, the Christian fable, of Eusebius, moulded out of a dream, at the distance of a quarter of a century.” But, at this point he, reverses his whole position. Having scoffed the statement out of all credibility, he grows sensitive for his own. He has indisposed the mind to truth by contempt, he may now concede without danger, and he concedes with the liberality of an advocate. After having shot his bitterest shaft as an infidel, he secures his retreat as a historian, by the actual acknowledgment, that, for the transaction, there is all the evidence that can be given by contemporary medals and inscriptions, by public monuments, and by the immediate establishment of the Cross as the imperial banner !

But, turning away from this melancholy example of historic dishonesty and personal degradation ; it is to be observed, in the first place, that

we have *against* the narrative no evidence whatever; while for it we have the admitted facts,—that the Cross was adopted as the “sign” of the Roman troops long before Constantine was master of the empire, and longer still before the empire ceased to be Pagan—that a statue was erected to Constantine in Rome within *three years* of the defeat of Maxentius, in which the figure bore a javelin with a transverse bar at the top (probably as close an imitation of the Cross as he could venture to adopt in a city, still the chief seat of Paganism), with an inscription referring, in the same cautious style, to Divine aid—“*Instinctu divinitatis, mentis magnitudine*”—that medals exist, some with the bust of Constantine on the obverse, and on the reverse, two standards upright, and between them *a large Cross*, with the legend, “Gloria Exercitus;” others having on the reverse two figures of victory standing, and between them a buckler, on which is *a Cross*—that Constantine wore the monogram of the Cross on his helmet; and that this monogram is found on his medals. Those would be sufficient evidences for any historic statement. But Du Voisin, whose book on the subject closed the original controversy, and to whom Gibbon gives the reluctant praise of “learning and moderation,” supplies us with additional contemporary evidence. Artemius, an officer in the army of Constantine (afterwards martyred by Julian,) distinctly states, in his

“ Acts,” that—“ Constantine was called by Jesus Christ to the true religion, at the time of that obstinate combat in which Maxentius was defeated. For then, at the hour of mid-day, the sign of the Cross appeared in heaven, brighter than the sun, with an inscription in golden letters, by which victory was promised to Constantine. I myself saw that sign and read that inscription, as well as all who formed the army of that prince, many of whom are still living, and in your army.” Du Voisin gives other testimonies equally strong.

Yet, what is the whole difficulty? The statement of Eusebius is given with every mark of simple truth. What object could Constantine be supposed to have in detailing a falsehood on the subject, twenty-five years after the diadem of the world was on his brow? We see the great conqueror, the foremost man of the earth, stating a circumstance in his early career, which accounted for the chief instance of his good fortune, his defeat of Maxentius, and the most momentous event of his life, his conversion; in grave confidence to an ecclesiastic of high rank and name; and we are to suppose that this most eminent person existing, swears to a foolish fabrication of his own, without regard to either dignity or conscience; and even without the small palliative of any conceivable object. Gibbon's conception of Constantine in this instance, is that of a crafty old statesman lying to delude a monk. The true

view would be, that of a mighty monarch, long past the period of earthly insecurity, calmly conversing with a Christian bishop, on the Divine interposition which had guided his way to universal power, and stamped the greatest revolution in the records of empire. No topic could be more natural to the memory of a man of the highest success and the highest mind, and no statement of such a conversation could be more like the truth, than the plain and natural language in which it is given by Eusebius.

The common objections—"why have we not the evidence of the army?—why has not the miracle been detailed by every writer who has mentioned the reign?—are mere trifling. How few in any army see, or seeing, remember circumstances which afterwards make the pith of history? How few soldiers, busied in preparation for the morrow's fight, would think of *recording* any appearance above their heads, while the enemy's line lay before them? Nor was it so much the phenomenon of the day, as the vision of the subsequent night, that made the complete impression on Constantine himself, prepared as he was by prayer. The chief *immediate* purport of the sign was in the inscription. The inscription was in *Greek*, (perhaps with Divine reference alike to the language of the New Testament, and to that portion of the empire in which the kingdom of Christianity was to be first *established*.) But the army of Constantine was

composed of the British Legionaries. How few of those could be conceived to understand Greek ?

But the Sign is the subject of direct narratives of the time, Artemius, Philostorgus, &c. and of subsequent authorities, Socrates, Sozomen, Theodoret, &c. As to the want of publicity, are we to conceive that in the ancient world matters of public intelligence were collected with the eagerness, and propagated with the activity of our day ; or that the middle of a furious *civil war*, and general shock of society, was the time for their circulation ? But the soldiery *did* give the most sufficient and extraordinary testimony to the truth of the phenomenon, by adopting the Cross, at the moment, as the SIGN of the Roman army. It is impossible to account for this adoption by mere attachment to their general, or by any human motives. The fidelity of the Roman soldier to his standard was a principle superseding all others. The countless majority of the population were still Pagan ; so, of course, must have been the majority of the troops. The government was Pagan, the senate was Pagan, Constantine himself was Pagan. Christianity was still a scorned sect. But a few years before it had been denounced and stigmatized by every organ of the government. The *offence* of the Cross was undisguised ; the Roman soldier would have felt himself degraded by a badge, which to the Roman millions must have represented only ignominy and crime. Yet.



at the moment, 40,000 legionaries are seen abandoning the standards that were to them as *gods*<sup>1</sup>; and binding on their helmets, and carving on their shields, the emblem, of all emblems the most marked by proverbial scorn, the unwarlike and abhorred sign of the punishment of a slave.

How is this to be accounted for, but by some supernatural impression, which impelled the troops to look upon the adoption of the Cross as the will, not of man, but of a Power to whom man is the dust of the balance? It might be done by a great celestial wonder, a Cross of glory flashing its lustres across the heavens, and showing irresistibly to all eyes and understandings, that the stigma of the Cross was no more. But by what demonstration less conspicuous and convincing could it be done?

But was the Divine interposition in the cause of Christianity now exhibited for the first time by phenomena in the skies?—A burst of divine glory had announced the birth at Bethlehem, and announced it to shepherds—a star had floated above the cradle of the mighty Infant, and been the guide to an obscure groupe of Chaldee pilgrims—A powerfully significant sign from Heaven had taught a solitary apostle, that the time was come

<sup>1</sup> The Roman idols and effigies of the emperors were among the military standards, and they received worship. “*Religio Romanorum Castrensis signa veneratur; signa jurat.*” (Tertull.)

for the conversion of the Gentiles—A pillar of divine flame had descended on a simple missionary of the Sanhedrin, on his way to Damascus, and prepared him for that career, of which its splendour and purity were the truest symbols. Was the conversion of a monarch, an army, and an empire, more unworthy of a Divine token, than the instruction of a prejudiced, or the rebuke of a persecuting, follower of the Law of Moses? It is remarkable that the greatest of the prophecies, the Apocalypse, which still cheers and enlightens the Christian world, reveals the first age of Christian triumph under the figure of a monarch riding forth to victory, with the Divine promise of “*conquering and to conquer.*” But the Cross of Constantine possesses a still more direct distinction. It was the object of our Lord’s *personal prophecy*; the evidence by which he was to proclaim the foundation of his kingdom.

As at the cessation of the Deluge, the pledge of Divine protection to the patriarchal church was given in the rainbow, the Sign of the Covenant of God; so at the close of that judgment which wrecked Judah, and was now to extinguish the empire of Paganism, the sign of protection to the Christian church was given in that Cross in heaven, which led the first Christian monarch to victory, and placed Christianity on the universal throne.

## CHAPTER XLII.

### THE SECOND ADVENT.

THE prophecy of the second coming of the Messiah, contained in the 24th chapter of St. Matthew, and the corresponding chapters of St. Mark and St. Luke<sup>1</sup>, is so closely connected with the “Sign,” and constitutes so distinct and wondrous an evidence of the prophetic power of our Lord, of his personal care for his disciples, and of the government exercised by him as providential King of the world, that it forms one of the most important portions of the whole science of the Scriptures. Its importance, however, has drawn upon it the misfortune of the most perplexing variety of interpretations. The whole prophecy has thus been, by some, conceived to limit itself to the destruction of Jerusalem ; and by others, to mingle that destruction throughout with the final judgment. But all the interpretations end in wrapping the truth in heavier folds, and leaving the impression

<sup>1</sup> Mark xiii. Luke xxi.

on the reader, that this prophecy singularly deviates from the characteristic simplicity of Scripture.

Three hypotheses have been offered, to explain the portion of the prophecy peculiarly relating to the second advent; for the earlier portion is universally and justly referred to the fall of Jerusalem.—By the first hypothesis, the coming of Christ and the convulsions of the heavens and earth, imply only the destruction of the Jewish state<sup>1</sup>. But this is refuted by the distinct declaration of the text; that those convulsions shall not exist until a period *subsequent* to the Jewish calamities. (“*After the tribulation,*” Μετα την θλιψιν.)—By the second, those convulsions are conceived to refer to the judgment and final destruction of the world<sup>2</sup>. But this is equally overthrown by the text, which declares that they shall *immediately* succeed the close of the Jewish calamities. (Straightway, in direct succession, ευθως.)—By the third, the Jewish “tribulation” is supposed to imply the whole interval from the fall of the state to the end of the world; the convulsions of the heavens implying the end of all things<sup>3</sup>. But this, like the former, is overthrown

<sup>1</sup> Whitby, &c. Hammond conceives that there may be some emblematic reference to the final judgment.

<sup>2</sup> This seems to have been the general opinion among the leading Fathers.

<sup>3</sup> Bishop Horsley’s daring hypothesis. In his usual style,

by the text ; which declares that the Jewish “ tribulation ” there contemplated should close within a brief period, and that it was, in fact, so limited by the Divine hand, for the express safety of the Church existing in Judæa ; a declaration obviously extinguishing all reference to the centuries which have elapsed since that Church ceased to exist, at the final fall of the nation under Hadrian.

The following interpretation of this great prophecy, formed on the combined statements of the three Evangelists, is proposed, as giving a view of its successive features, divested of their usual difficulties, and consistent with the general clearness of Scripture.

Matt. xxiii. 38, 39. Our Lord had concluded his public teaching in Jerusalem by a tremendous denunciation of Divine wrath on the Pharisees and the people. His last words were, that their Temple should be wholly desecrated once more — “ Their House shall be left to them *desolate*,” and that he should never enter it again, as their Messiah, until a converted nation received him at his Second Coming, with shouts for “ Him who cometh in the name of the Lord.”

he cuts the knot. But this only involves him in stronger contradiction with the original.

Matt. xii. 41. He then departed, followed by his disciples. On his way through the Temple, he seems to have taken a final opportunity of expressing his scorn of the national character, by contrasting the hypocritical ostentation of the rich with the offering of the widow.

He then went out from the city by the way leading to the Mount of Olives. The aspect of the Temple on this side was of unequalled grandeur; and some of the disciples, probably with a heavy heart, at the denunciation of its sacrilege<sup>1</sup>, turned, to remark to him on the extraordinary beauty of its buildings, and the costliness of its marble walls. Our Lord now declared, perhaps with an addition to the force of his former language, that its catastrophe was to be *total ruin*. "The days shall come, when there shall not be left one stone upon another."

Christ now ascended the Mount of Olives; from which the whole city lay beneath the eye. The four Apostles, Peter, James, John, and Andrew, of whom three had been with him on the

<sup>1</sup> The desolation was probably not conceived by the disciples to amount to a total ruin. For though "desolate" was the word used by Daniel to express its state in the captivity; the desolation by Antiochus Epiphanes had created the latest terror in the popular mind. His standard was "The abomination of desolation." (Maccabees.) And the public feeling, from Malachi's prophecy, undoubtedly was, that the Temple should stand, at least until the triumphant coming of the Messiah.

mount of transfiguration, and were evidently admitted to his peculiar confidence, and the fourth was one of his first disciples, now came, apart from the rest, to ask for such knowledge as it might be his high will to impart, on subjects of such natural interest to the man of Judæa. Their questions were, “When shall those things be; and what shall be the sign of thy coming, and the end of the world?” (The end of the *present era* of the world, *συντελεια του αιωνος* <sup>1</sup>.) Our Lord,

<sup>1</sup> As an instance of the labour which this prediction has occupied, this simple inquiry has given birth to four hypotheses. The first, that there is but one question, and that it wholly refers to the fall of Jerusalem. (Whitby, Hammond, Newton, Wakefield, &c.) The second, that there are two, comprehending the national ruin and the regeneration. (Tertullian, Lightfoot, &c.) The third, that there are three, and that their chief reference is to the end of the world. (Clarke, Porteus, &c.) The fourth, that there are three, but severally referring to the fall of Jerusalem, the sign of the second coming, and the general judgment.

The second hypothesis seems the true one. In the denunciation in the Temple, our Lord had declared, that “all those things” should come. What were those things? Vengeance for the murders committed by their ancestors on the prophets, and to be brought to the full by their own cruelties to the future missionaries of the Gospel. “That upon you may come all the righteous blood shed upon the earth.” “Verily I say unto you, all those things shall come upon *this* generation.” But our Lord had also said, in pronouncing the desolation of the Temple, that a time should arrive when he was to return, and be received in triumph by the nation. This period every Jew, in all ages, contemplated,

according to his custom, first turned their curiosity into a caution: He warned them against their national liability to err. "Take heed that no man deceive you;" for false Messiahs were to deceive many. Having given them the caution, he detailed the nature of the coming calamity, and prepared them for it by its evidences<sup>1</sup>. Those evidences were to be—first, sudden public commotions in Judæa and the neighbouring kingdoms, and earthquakes, famines, and extraordinary meteors in the heavens. Still the spirit of his detail was caution; and he guarded the disciples against premature fear, or flight from their country, by telling them that those tumults were not the *immediate* sign of the national ruin: they were but "the *beginnings* of sorrows<sup>2</sup>." He warned them, however, that they should be personally in peril from another and an earlier source. They should be per-

and knew by the name of the times of refreshing—the regeneration—the end of the existing order of things—the consummation of the Aion. The idea of the extinction of the world seems never to have entered into the thought of any Jew; and it was even incompatible with their hopes of the kingdom of the Messiah. Thus, they ask him two questions, both of the most natural kind, yet completely contrasted: the first adopting our Lord's own words yet echoing in their ears, "All those things shall come?" asks, "When shall all those things," when shall the vengeance, come?—the next the equally anxious question, "What shall be the sign of thy coming?" What shall tell us of the approach of the restoration?

<sup>1</sup> Matt. xxiv. 6.

<sup>2</sup> Luke xxi. 12.



secuted by their countrymen. "They shall deliver you up to the synagogues, and in the synagogues ye shall be beaten." The prophecy goes to the exactness of stating, what to the Jew must have seemed three most improbable circumstances; that they should be brought before kings to plead for their religion; that the result of their sufferings should be the actual increase of their religion; and that the promise of the Gospel should be shared with the heathen.

Matt. xiii. 9. He next announced a totally *new* scene of trial, the heathen world: and declared the new power given for the purpose by the Holy Spirit, the wisdom, reasoning, and knowledge, which no human opposition could overthrow. "The Gospel must *first* be published among all nations ( $\epsilon\theta\nu\eta$ , the heathen). But when they shall bind you and deliver you up, take no thought before-hand what you shall speak. For *I* will give you a mouth and wisdom."

Matt. xiii. 12. But the persecution in this new scene of Christianity, was to be much more violent and extensive than in the former. The converts were to be betrayed on all sides, and mercilessly slain. They were to become an object of universal hatred. "Ye shall be hated of all nations (the heathen) for my sake." The violence of the persecution was to have the effect of terrifying many into apostasy. "And then shall many be offended, and shall betray one

another." But those disciples who held their faith to the *end*, should be preserved, notwithstanding the national ruin. The precise arrival of this period, was to be intimated by the general planting of the Gospel in the regions of heathenism. *Then* the peculiar calamities of Judah were to begin. "This Gospel shall be preached among all the heathen, and then shall the *end* come."

Matt. xiii. 14. But the *fact*, which was to announce the moment to fly from Jerusalem, was to be the approach of the Roman army to the city itself. "When ye shall see the abomination of desolation," (or, as in Luke xxi. 20, "when ye shall see Jerusalem compassed with armies,") "*then* know that the desolation draweth nigh." The flight was then to be *instantaneous*; according to the strong expressions,—“Let him that is on the housetop not go down into the house to take any thing. Let him that is in the field not return,” to take even his clothes. For then shall be the national fall<sup>1</sup>.

For then shall the denunciations of the prophets be realized; "All things which are *written* shall be fulfilled." And the suffering shall be *threefold*—slaughter, captivity, and national dissolution: Judah remaining in a state of public extinction; until the work of Providence, with regard to the heathen, is completed. "They

<sup>1</sup> Luke xxi. 22.

shall fall by the edge of the sword—they shall be led captive among the heathen—Jerusalem shall be trampled down by the heathen, until their times are fulfilled.” The horrors of the ruin of Jerusalem, shall also be unequalled in human annals; but their *extreme* violence shall be brief, and made so for the sake of the Christian Church; “For the elect’s sake whom He hath chosen, He hath shortened those days.”

Matt. xiii. 21. But a new peril shall come, connected with, and following the fall of Jerusalem; the delusions of false Messiahs: against which, the converts are to be especially on their guard. “For there shall arise false Christs, and false prophets, and shall show great signs and wonders.” Some shall come in the desert, some in the cities, but all shall be the source of ruin to their followers: for insurrection will be put down in blood: for wherever the Romans shall find an opportunity of slaying the Jews, they will exercise it; according to the proverb, “Where the carcase is, there will be the eagles, the birds of prey.”

Matt. xxiv. 26, 27. He then gave them an infallible test of the false Messiahs. At whatever time the Son of man shall actually come, there will be nothing doubtful, or concealed, in his coming. He will be neither hidden in secret chambers, nor to be sought for in wildernesses. His presence will be conspicuous to all mankind,

instant, vivid, and general, as the lightning. “For, as the lightning cometh out of the West, and shineth even unto the East, so shall the coming of the Son of man be.” Thus far had been declared, to forewarn the converts against the three peculiar errors into which they might be led, as natives of Judæa: those were—premature flight, flight too long delayed, and the delusions of false Messiahs. The three precautions were—to wait until they saw the Roman standards actually reach the neighbourhood of Jerusalem; then to wait no longer; and finally, to disbelieve every announcement of a Messiah either concealed, distant, or in any degree obscure. For when the true Messiah should come, his visible and universal power and splendour would be totally incapable of being mingled with any appearance of this world. So far relates to Judæa.

The remaining portion of the prophecy adopts an entirely distinct character; it offers no reference to Jerusalem, nor to the disciples, as natives of Judæa.—When<sup>1</sup> the sufferings of Israel shall be closed, by their final extinction as a people; subsequently, and at a brief period *after*, (“immediately after the tribulation of those days,”) shall a tribulation come upon the *world*. Its government shall be shaken; its princes shall be flung from their thrones; the heathen nations

<sup>1</sup> Matt. xxiv. 20.

shall be in a state of violent disturbance and suffering; all the principles of society shall seem to be on the point of destruction. “There shall be signs in the sun, and in the moon, and in the stars, and upon the earth distress of nations (the heathen) men’s hearts failing them for fear, and for looking after those things that are coming on the earth, for the powers of the heavens shall be shaken<sup>1</sup>.”

Matt. xxiv. 30. Subsequently to this general shock of the frame of heathen government and society, an extraordinary change shall take place. A new power shall suddenly assume the throne. The religion of the Cross shall be supreme; the old powers of heaven, the prophetic emblems of human sovereignty, had been shaken from

<sup>1</sup> The ambiguity of the word *τοτε*, which, like our word *then*, may signify either the moment, or succession at any distance of time, however remote, has tended to perplex this prophecy. But *τοτε* is used as *επειτα* (“afterwards”), John xi. 6. and even as extending to the future world, 1 Cor. xiii. 12. In the present prophecy it clearly acts as a point of distinction between successive periods, totally distinct from each other, though compressed, as is not uncommon at the close of a prophecy, into a small compass. Of this compression, we have an instance in Daniel’s prophecy of the Messiah, where two verses contain the history of the changes from the first coming of the Messiah to the day of judgment; and in the 15th chapter of the I Corinthians, where Christ’s resurrection, the kingdom of God, and the final judgment, follow in a single verse (24).

their firmament, a new power is to rise in their room. Christianity is to be the ruling light of nations. They shall see the "SIGN of the Son of Man," in the heavens<sup>1</sup>.

Matt. xxiv. 30. Subsequently, another great event is to come ; all nations are to be ravaged by war ; " the tribes of the earth shall mourn." The overthrow of sovereigns, or the convulsion of thrones, is no longer to be the sole work of Providence ; the emblematic heavens or their stars are no longer to be alone darkened ; the ruin is to fall on the population ; the multitudes of earth shall be made the victims, and victims to their disregard of Christianity, and their cruelties to its people. This is also the language of St. John, declaring the Divine inflictions that are to fall upon the infidel world towards its close. " Every eye shall see him, and they also which have pierced him, (insulted, " crucified him afresh,") and all the kindreds (tribes) of the earth shall wail, because of him."

Rev. i. 7. But this scourge of the infidel world shall be followed by another mighty event. The

<sup>1</sup> Though the power of the Cross is, in conformity to the prophetic idiom, to imply the supremacy of the Faith ; yet this does not preclude the actual appearance of the phenomenon, as a sign of the period, in the skies. In the same prophetic language, we have the declaration that Christ shall come in power from heaven, and reign. But this emblematic language does not preclude his actual coming in the visible glory, which the angel announced at his ascension.

Redeemer himself shall assume the government of the earth; he shall be the universal Sovereign; he shall also come in personal and visible grandeur from above. Having previously seen the “Sign of the Son of Man” exalted to power, they shall now see the Son of Man himself, “coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory.”

Mark xiii. 27. Another great event is to consummate the prophecy, and the providential government. The religion of Christ shall finally be universal. Its former sovereignty, in the days of the *Sign* of the Son of Man, was limited to the Roman empire; it shall now extend to the farthest limits of the earth. All nations shall flow into it; conversion shall be boundless; “He shall send his angels, to gather his elect from the uttermost parts of the earth.” Perhaps, even more than earth is visibly to bow before this illustrious sovereignty; for he is to summon his worshippers, not only from the uttermost parts of earth, but “the uttermost parts of heaven.”

Matt. xxiv. 32. Our Lord having thus thrown light on all the ages of Christianity, tells the disciples that *they* should rejoice at the first symptom of those shocks and changes, however tremendous to the world, for they shall all finally minister to the glory of the Gospel. “When those things are *beginning* (*αρχομενων*) to come to pass, then look up, and lift up your heads, for your redemption (your release, enfranchise-

ment, ἀπολυτρωσις,) draweth nigh (is approaching, ἐγγιζει)<sup>1</sup>."

Luke xxi. 28. Those events shall follow, as certainly as the approach of summer is indicated by the sprouting of the trees. When the disciples see all those things existing (γινόμενα)<sup>2</sup>, they must be prepared to expect the coming of the supremacy of the Gospel. And the period when those changes were to commence should be within the life-time of the existing generation. "Verily, I say unto you that this generation shall not pass away until all those things shall be"<sup>3</sup> (shall begin).

Having now told them of the signs which were to announce the succeeding fall of Jerusalem, and which were to prepare them for its coming, as the first leaves prepared them to expect the summer, he adverts to the latter and greater catastrophe. "Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away"<sup>3</sup>. The expression may have been proverbial; but no allusion could have fallen lightly from the Divine Speaker, and it seems to have been the direct opening to the further portion of the prophetic warning. Caution to his disciples is still the characteristic; and to preserve them from the extravagances and disappointments into which the prospect of the immediate coming of Christ on earth might betray them, as they have

<sup>1</sup> Mark xiii. 29.

<sup>2</sup> Luke xxi. 32.

<sup>3</sup> Matt. xxiv. 34, 35.



betrayed so many since, he tells them that the time of *this* consummation is beyond the possible knowledge of created beings ; that even he, as their teacher, is not empowered to communicate it ; that it is reserved in the councils of Heaven. But he tells them, that the knowledge thus reserved, ought to have the effect of making them feel the necessity of perpetual vigilance in their preparation to meet the second coming of their Lord ; “ Of that day and that hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but the Father.” But this he *can* communicate ; that all their vigilance will be required, for the character of the period will be one of thoughtlessness, worldliness, and vice. Mankind will be found, as they were in the days immediately before the Flood, thinking only of their earthly pursuits and passions, until the moment of the catastrophe. Also, in the time of the final visitation, judgment shall fall on man, and inevitably strike the guilty, however they may be concealed under the general similitude of human pursuits and circumstances. “ Two men shall be labouring in the field, one shall be taken and the other left,” &c.

Of all the prophecies ever delivered to man, this was the most detailed, the most exact, and the most applicable to the wants of those to whom it was immediately addressed. It is without an equal, as an instance of transfusing the oracles of Heaven into the familiar uses of life ; and a strik-

ing and evident distinction, with reference to this object, is observable in the two parts of the prophecy. That which is immediately directed to the preservation of the disciples, and reveals the fate of Judah, is in the simplest language of man with man. But when Judah is no longer in view, and the prediction embraces the fate of Gentile empire, it instantly assumes the habitual dialect of prophecy, and reveals the darkening heavens and their falling spheres, with the mysterious loftiness of Isaiah or Ezekiel.

The fulfilment was exact, and in the precise *succession* of the prophecy. The signs began, within about ten years, by the announcement of false Messiahs. Theudas, A.D. 48 ; the impostors who drew the people into the desert, and were destroyed by Felix, A.D. 57 ; the Egyptian, defeated by Felix in A.D. 58 ; and the “ false prophet ” who led the 6000 into the heart of the flames when the temple was destroyed, A.D. 70.

The next sign was to be “ wars and rumours of wars.” The heathen nations soon began to be involved in violent conflicts. The Parthian war with Rome was followed by the civil war of the competitors for the imperial throne ; the four emperors, Nero, Galba, Otho, and Vitellius, were slain within the space of a year and a half. Famine and earthquakes were frequent in this period.

The Gospel was persecuted first by the Jews ;

but its preachers, though suffering insult and injury, were seldom exposed to loss of life. On its breaking into the Gentile world, it was persecuted with sudden and sweeping cruelty. This too was the predicted signal of the Jewish calamities. In the year A.D. 64. the 11th year of Nero, the great Roman persecution began, on the charge against the Christians of having burnt the city. In the year 65 the Jewish war began, by the refusal of Eleazar to sacrifice for the prosperity of the empire.

In the same year Cestius Gallus, the governor of Syria, advanced with an army to Jerusalem, and burned its suburb, Bezetha ; but retired within three days ; on which the Christians left the city and took refuge in Pella. This was the first sight of the “ Abomination of Desolation,” the idol standard.

The attack of Jerusalem (April 22, A.D. 70.) was hastened by Titus, with the intention of saving the country from being destroyed by a protracted war. The temple was burnt, August 5, and the city finally taken, September 2, A.D. 70.

The fall of the city was succeeded by frequent insurrections in the Jewish settlements throughout the empire, chiefly headed by false Messiahs, until the great final insurrection under Barchochebas, which was extinguished, with the nation, in the siege of Bithur, by Hadrian.

Within fifty years followed the extraordinary

convulsion of the Roman government, the assassination of the emperors, and the general dislocation of all authority in the empire.

Within about fifty years after, the Vision of the Cross appeared to Constantine, who adopted it as his banner, became emperor, and established Christianity as the religion of the empire.

The remainder of the prophecy is still to come ; but we have the most distinct declarations of other parts of Scripture, directly authenticating it. The characteristic of the closing period is declared to be a burst of war which shall involve all nations. "The tribes of the earth shall mourn." In the Apocalypse, the angel who immediately precedes our Lord's Second coming, proclaims this universal and expiring effort of the spirit of hostility, which has so long disturbed the world. The angel utters a cry to all the birds of prey to come and feed on the last and greatest feast of massacre. "Come and gather yourselves to the supper of the great God. That ye may eat the flesh of kings, and the flesh of captains, and the flesh of mighty men, and the flesh of horses, and of them that sit on them, and the flesh of all men, both free and bond, both small and great<sup>1</sup>."

The final declaration is the "Second Advent," the coming of the triumphant Messiah to assume the throne, "the Son of Man coming in the clouds

<sup>1</sup> Apoc. xix. 17, 18.

of heaven, with power and great glory." In the dialect of prophecy, this would not necessarily imply more than the complete and extraordinary possession of earthly power by the Divine Being ; but we have also the distinct declaration, not only of the apostolic writings, but of the angels at the Ascension<sup>1</sup>, that, as our Lord ascended to heaven before their eyes, so he should return, visibly and bodily in his state of glory. Then shall come the consummation, the establishment of the Divine kingdom on the earth, in the midst of the rejoicing of earth and heaven. " And the seventh angel sounded, and there were great voices in heaven, saying, The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord and his Christ, and He shall reign for ever and ever<sup>2</sup>."

The perplexities of the commentators on this prophecy have arisen chiefly from their overlooking the distinction between the Jewish and Pagan portions ; and from their equally overlooking, in the brevity of the latter, the separate nature of its successive clauses ; the word *τοτε* having the double power, of expressing the present time, and succession.

But the chief perplexity to the general reader has

<sup>1</sup> Acts i. 2.

<sup>2</sup> Apoc. xi. 15.

arisen from the mistranslation of *γενηται*, by “fulfilled” instead of “shall exist.” The expression, “This generation shall not pass away, until all those things shall be *fulfilled*,” falsifies the whole prediction; or compels the reader to conceive that our Lord came, at the time of the siege, metaphorically or obscurely, which he directly commands his disciples to disbelieve; that the convulsions of the sovereignties were contemporaneous with it, which he expressly declares were *after* it; and that his presence in glory was metaphorical, and is past, which is declared by the angels to be real, and by the prophets, to be among the last events of the world. But this confusion is entirely that of the translation. The original meaning of *γινομαι* is, “to happen, to occur.” Of the nineteen meanings which it assumes, but *one* has a reference to fulfilment. The word is repeatedly used in the prophecy, and is as repeatedly translated in its natural meaning. It is even so far from naturally implying fulfilment, that it is used where fulfilment is expressly negatived; “All these things must be (*γενεσθαι*) but the end is *not yet*.” (7.) Other instances are, “Pray that your flight may not be (*γενηται*) in the winter.” (20.) “For there shall be great tribulation, such as has not been, nor shall be,” (*γενηται*,) &c. The actual declaration to the disciples is, that the living generation should not pass away until all those things *existed* (had

commenced); and this was the fact; for they commenced within the exact period of a generation (calculated at thirty-three years). The prophecy was delivered in the thirty-third year of our Lord; and the war began in the sixty-fifth; though the fall even of the nation was not *fulfilled* until the war of Hadrian, (A. D. 132.) a century after. But historical events *exist* when they have once begun. The decline of the Roman empire existed two hundred years before it was fulfilled. The decline of the Popedom has existed since the fourteenth century. The commencement of the Jewish calamities is obviously all that the word γενηται implied; and the παντα ταυτα was a direct reference to the previous words of our Lord, repeated in the question of the disciples, and in both instances referring directly to the vengeance threatened against the Jewish nation.

## CHAPTER XLIII.

### THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH.

THE Deluge had extinguished the apostate Sethites, and left the world open to the undisputed possession of the little patriarchal family, which had kept its faith, and then constituted the only Church of God. The three sons of the patriarch were thenceforth to divide the world, and hold it in full supremacy; Shem the lord of the East, Japhet of the West, and Ham of the South.

Noah planted a vine, became intoxicated with its produce, and slept uncovered. Ham revealed his father's weakness, but was rebuked by the superior piety of Shem and Japhet, who reverentially covered their parent with a robe. Noah awaking, pronounced a malediction on the posterity of Ham.

The Second Cycle still retains the exactness of its parallelism to the first. The fall of Judæa had totally extinguished the original Jewish Church; the Christian, the remnant of the true Israel, had survived among the terrors of the national ruin.



But it stood alone, in a world which was a desert in every sense of religion. Yet, in less than three centuries, it was to be the ruler of that world. Struggling from the rudiments of precarious toleration up to the fulness of sacred empire, Christianity was at length the supreme religion of the Roman world. The "kingdom" had "come" in "power." Yet, strictly corresponding to the Divine announcement, a kingdom of spiritual sovereignty ; a throne, not according to this world, yet possessing a larger territory, and, in all the purer senses of power, exercising a higher dominion, than had ever been given to sword or sceptre. The world never before or since exhibited so magnificent a provision for spreading knowledge and virtue through mankind.

Adopting the forms of the Roman empire, which, in the time of Constantine, was divided into thirteen vast Provinces, or civil "Dioceses," each ruled by an Exarch, or Prefect ; the empire of the Church was divided into Provinces<sup>1</sup>,—Constantinople, Antioch, Alexandria, Cæsarea, Ephesus, Rome, Thessalonica, Milan, Carthage, to which Jerusalem and Justiniana were subsequently added. The extent of territory thus placed under the several Ecclesiastical rulers,

<sup>1</sup> The *name* of Patriarch is not mentioned before the Council of Chalcedon, A. D. 451 ; but the authority subsisted from the time of Constantine.

often comprehended what were once great kingdoms. The Patriarchate<sup>1</sup> of Antioch originally included Judæa, Syria, and Mesopotamia. The Patriarchate of Cæsarea reached from the Euphrates to the Helespont; comprehending that loveliest and most exuberant region of the ancient world, Asia Minor. The Patriarchate of Constantinople ruled nearly the entire of what has since been European Turkey and Greece. The Patriarchate of Alexandria extended over Egypt. The Patriarchate of Africa included the Roman proconsular provinces, and stretched from the rich and highly-peopled settlements of Byzacium and Tripolis, over the uncircumscribed regions of the two Mauritania. The world west of Greece was ruled by the Patriarchs of Rome, Milan, Spain, and Gaul. Eighteen hundred Bishops administered the minor rule of the religious empire<sup>2</sup>. Myriads and millions of human hearts

<sup>1</sup> The subject of the Patriarchates is largely treated of by Bingham, *Antiq. B.* ix. &c.

<sup>2</sup> Gibbon's acrimony is almost neutralized in his description of this rapid and astonishing dominion. He nearly forgets his bitterness, while he follows its course through "the Episcopal Churches planted along the banks of the Nile, on the sea-coast of Africa, in the proconsular Asia, in the southern provinces of Italy," &c. Fortunate for him and for others, if his philosophy had paused *honestly* to inquire, by what human influence this overwhelming supremacy *could* have been obtained. This reasoning on "the five causes" must, even to himself, have seemed a mere trifling with the question.

were awakened, in that time of Divine compassion, to the knowledge of immortality. This was the first gathering of the great harvest; the anticipation of that final summoning, which shall yet awake the ends of the earth; the first flash and radiance of that glory, before which heaven and earth shall yet brighten into kindred glory.

But it had been distinctly foretold, that this state of purity would be brief. The Apostolic writings are full of warnings against the long and fearful decline that was to follow the day of holiness: and, those declarations were realized. The Vine, the Scriptural emblem of the Church, had been planted and had flourished: but the spirit of Paganism still existed. A people born in selfishness and sensuality were easily corrupted once more: the generous and sacred zeal of the first founders of Christianity began to be superseded by the pretence and ambition of men hostile to its principles. The Vine had intoxicated the sitters under its shade.

By an unconscious, but close, conformity to the tripartite dominion of the sons of Noah, the Church had already divided its sovereignty into three branches—the Eastern, the Western, and the African. In the same conformity to the type, the African, the Church of the descendants of Ham, was seen fulfilling the unrighteous office of their ancestor. In *Egypt* broke out the first and most fatal of all the heresies—Arianism;

the denial of the eternal Divinity of our Lord. All the discontents or subtleties of schism, were trivial to this new and violent shape of hostility to the Christian religion. The Divinity of Christ, co-equal and co-eternal, was the foundation-stone of the whole building of the Gospel ; essential to the efficacy, perhaps even to the idea, of an Atonement. The principle of the doctrine pervaded every promise of support and guidance on earth, and every hope of the future world. The blow which struck there was dealt by a hand which well knew where the heart of Christianity lay.

Arianism, in its earlier day, was the most formidable disturber of the Christian world, as it has been the most persevering since. But its Egyptian disturbances were true to the history of religious evil ; they began in faction. The struggles of Donatus and Cæcilian for the primacy of Africa, struggles into which the partizans on both sides plunged with hands and hearts ready for the last excesses, had degraded public morals, before heresy was suffered to make still broader inroads on Christian doctrine. They had scarcely been allayed when the scourge came in the corruption of the faith. “ The schism of the Donatists was confined to Africa. The more diffusive mischief of the Trinitarian controversy successively penetrated into every part of the Christian world. From the age of Constantine to that of Clovis and Theodoric, the temporal interests of

both the Romans and barbarians were deeply involved in the theological disputes of Arianism<sup>1</sup>."

Before the violences and corruptions which this heresy inflicted, all the other heresies stooped their heads. Bloodshed and barbarism were its concomitants, in whatever quarter of the world it trod. In the fourth century, under the successor of Constantine, it became paramount, and exercised the vengeance of successful heresy. In the fifth, it followed the Goths into Asia. In the ignorance and desolation of the sixth, it overshadowed a large portion of the three quarters of the globe. In the seventh, it sprang up with new force under the dominion of the Lombard barbarians in Italy. But, then came the "captivity," the Papal subjugation of the Church, in which all the perversities of opinion were sentenced, with all its truths, to the same dungeon. At the revival of religion in the sixteenth century, it coiled itself round the Church once more; and though constantly crushed in the presence of learning and virtue, found, and still finds, too congenial a shelter, in the presumption, which denies all that it cannot define.

In this solemn emergency, the eastern and western Churches shook off their growing apathy,

<sup>1</sup> Gibbon, v. 2. His view of the passion and profligacy of those tumults is just. But his statement of the controversy itself is at once affected, trifling, and dishonest.

and resolutely and openly came forward to retrieve the fallen character of their common religion. The first Council of Christianity, the famous Council of Nice, was assembled for the purpose of asserting the Gospel<sup>1</sup>. Its decision was formed with a dignity and authority worthy of the crisis. Of the three hundred and eighteen bishops present, but five were found to side with Arius. The doctrines of the arch-heretic were fully condemned. The Nicene Creed was additionally promulgated, as a declaration of the unstained faith, and a standard of the opinions of the primitive Church for ever. The robe could not have been more reverentially and effectually drawn over the shame of the parent by the filial hands. From this era, too, the African Church seemed marked for perpetual suffering. Occasionally powerful and active, it still sank, took but a slight share in the general transactions of Christianity, perished, while both the Western and Eastern stood, and has lain in a hopeless grave for a thousand years, trampled on by the feet of the Mahometan and the barbarian.

The Second Cycle had now assumed that aspect which it retained for ages. The fall of the Roman empire, the invasions of the northern tribes, and the general wild struggles of Europe in its misery, were still to be suffered, and still to impede the

<sup>1</sup> A.D. 325.

progress of a Church whose spirit is peace, knowledge, and the diffusion of happiness. At length a yet more formidable trial arose; the evil which had been begun by heresy was consummated by usurpation; Egypt was followed by Rome. The licentious controversies of minds, made insubordinate by the wildness and the calamities of the time, were followed by their appropriate punishment, in the form of a total deprivation of freedom. The birthright of the Faith was seized for the building of the great Babylonian fabric which assumed to be the centre of universal empire. The divine attributes were claimed by a mortal authority. From this period darkness fell upon mankind. The Church existed but in the few scattered hearts which Providence, true to the promise that it should never utterly fail, preserved as the sacred seed of the future. Ignorance and persecution were thenceforth the character and the business of human existence. The earth was silent, but when it echoed the mandate of the Pontiff for the fall or rise of some vassal kingdom; and dark, but when it caught the blaze of some new superstition, flaming from the gorgeous altar of Rome. Thus sank into night the Second Cycle of the world.

# THE THIRD CYCLE.

## BOOK III.

### CHAPTER XLIV.

#### THE SECOND ADAM.

THE three Cycles perfectly correspond, in their leading facts, and in the order of those facts. But each exhibits a peculiarity, which, however, only gives additional evidence of the nature of the whole, as a providential system.

All the features of the first Cycle are direct appeals to the senses. Its characteristic may be pronounced materiality. Thus, to Adam happiness is represented by an actual garden of luxuriance and loveliness.—His discovery of the absence of mental companionship is by an actual display of the inferior creation—knowledge and immortality are represented by trees—the tempter is known only as a serpent—the sense of sin is nakedness, and forgiveness is clothing by the hand of Heaven—redemption is a combat, in which the



head of the serpent is to be bruised by the heel of his victor. The faith of Cain is tried by an actual sacrifice, the rejection of Cain is an actual banishment—the Divine approval of Enoch is by his actual transfer to the skies—the promise of safety is by an actual ark, the punishment by an actual deluge, the sign of forgiveness and protection by an actual rainbow—the dominion of the earth is by an actual possession. All is visible and tangible.

The second Cycle addresses itself in part to the senses, and in part to the mind. Its characteristic is a combination of materiality and spirituality. The original call to Abraham's obedience is a direct command that he should leave his country; the Divine favour is shown by a gift of offspring; the Divine trial of his faith is a command to sacrifice that offspring; the blessing is by a promise of territory, and a numerous race. Moses is summoned by the visible glory to lead an actual nation, by actual miracles, into the possession of lands and cities. The national homage is embodied in one great temple, with a ceremonial strongly addressed to the senses. The punishment of the nation is by actual wars, chastisements, and captivities. The final withdrawal of the Divine protection is by the actual overthrow of the national government, and total scattering of the people. Thus far, all is visibility. But,

connected with this exterior, there is an interior spirituality. The passage of the Red Sea is a baptism; the Passover a spiritual pledge. The whole Temple bears a spiritual reference to the Messiah—in whom was the dwelling of the Divine presence. Its ceremonial has a spiritual reference to his acts and qualities. Its High Priest and the lamb that was sacrificed on its altar, have an equal reference to the Great Sacrificer, who offered up himself for the sins of all.

The Third Cycle is wholly spiritual. It requires no pilgrimage, or personal hazard. It tasks only the obedience of the heart. Temporal possessions are not among its promises of reward. It is destitute of all the established ritual of the two former Cycles. It has neither the sacrifice of the Patriarchal, nor the ceremonial of the Jewish. For all the rites of both, it has but two, sprinkling with water, and tasting bread and wine—Baptism and the Lord's Supper—rites of the highest spiritual efficacy, but externally of the simplest possible kind. The Church itself is but partially an object of the senses. It is not one great commonwealth, compacted under one head, as in the Patriarchal day, nor gathered within one region, as in the Jewish. It is scattered through all nations; without any place of general assemblage, any general temple, any general government. Its only bond is spiritual allegiance; its only

Temple, wherever it can worship; its only law, the precepts of the Scriptures; its only government, the directing power of Heaven.

That three vast series, so strongly distinguished in principle, should coincide, with such perfect exactness of event, is among the finest evidences of Divine design. That the facts of the Christian Cycle fully bear out this coincidence, will require scarcely more than a brief enumeration.

It is to be previously observed, that this result, in the third Cycle, implies a more delicate and difficult contrivance than in the former examples. The Jewish Cycle could refer to but one predecessor. The Christian refers to two, the Jewish and the Patriarchal; and this, not simply by retaining the mere outline, which in both is the same, but by combining their discrepancies, and exhibiting the extraordinary achievement, of a series of events, expressly belonging to the manners, exigencies, and revolutions, of the last eighteen hundred years, and whose principle is spirituality, giving the complete texture of a series of events expressly belonging to the circumstances of two thousand years before, whose principle was a mixture of spirituality and materiality; and at the same time giving the equally complete texture of a series of events, expressly belonging to two thousand years earlier still, the events of a state of society altogether different from any that

has followed, and whose principle was materiality.

Our Lord is pronounced to be the Second Adam. The career of Christ, of the Church formed in his life-time, and of the Church from the Apostolic day to our own and to the end of the world, is the parallel to the life of Adam, of Eve, and of the Sethite line down to the end of the first Cycle.

Adam was formed of earth—an especial act of God breathed into him a soul.—He was formed beyond the bounds of the garden of Eden, but was transferred into it.—The angels rejoiced at his birth.—He was declared to have dominion over all that lived, to be king of the earth.—The law of unsinning obedience was pronounced to him, by which death was to follow transgression.—All the animals were brought before him to receive names.—Among them, no creature was found fit for his mental companionship—a bride was formed for him out of his own substance, and whom he declared to be inseparably united to him.—His bride was tempted by the serpent with the love of power, the desire “to be as gods.”—She shared the fruit of temptation with Adam: they discovered their crime, and terrified at the approach of their sentence, hid themselves.—The trial came; the serpent was sentenced without re-

mission, Adam and Eve were forgiven, yet sentenced to undergo temporary death, and were sent forth from the garden, to wander through the world. Thus far extends the *personal* history of Adam.

The correspondence of those circumstances with the history of our Lord's life, is exact, and in un-deviating order.—The announcement of his *conception* was made by the angel in Nazareth of Galilee, where he was declared to be at once the offspring of the woman, and the Son of God :—Christ was *born* in Bethlehem of Judah, in the territory which contained Jerusalem, the “Holy City,” the place of the only Temple.—Angels rejoicingly announced his birth—the Magi, by Divine impulse, and led by a light from heaven, came to his cradle to acknowledge “Him that was born King of the Jews<sup>1</sup> :” a dominion which implied universal sovereignty, Judæa being the declared ruler of nations. “*All* kings shall fall down before Him, *all* nations shall do Him service<sup>2</sup>.”—They presented to Him gold, frankincense, and myrrh, the three most esteemed products of the earth, the tribute of the earth to his sovereignty.—Christ, at the age of twelve, heard the Law of Moses delivered by the Jewish authorities in the Temple. This was a repetition of the law of unsinning obedience, the first cove-

<sup>1</sup> Matt. ii. 2.

<sup>2</sup> Psalm lxxii.

nant of Paradise, by which death was to follow transgression <sup>1</sup>.—At the commencement of his mission, the Jewish people were summoned to be baptized in the river Jordan, as an attestation of their hope in the name of the Messiah ; in other words, to receive a new name of faith and purity through his coming.—Yet the Jewish Church and people exhibited an utter incapacity of comprehending the true nature of Christ's mission ; and though they had readily been baptized into the name of the Messiah, Christ departed from the

<sup>1</sup> This transaction has not hitherto been explained by the commentators. Yet it was a very extraordinary one ; as the single instance in which our Lord appears, from infancy to manhood, and an instance which brings on him a charge of disobedience, which charge is answered only by a declaration of his being employed on higher objects than those belonging to his earthly parentage. By some it is supposed that he was taken to the Temple according to a Jewish custom of taking children to be taught the Law. (Lightfoot.) But the declared occasion was the Passover. His parents were evidently unacquainted with his being in the Temple ; and when they sought him there at last after three days, it was probably only from the information of those who heard him conversing in so public a place. But the whole circumstance is perfectly intelligible as a reference to the delivery of the law to Adam. For the first time the law of the primal covenant (of which the Mosaic law was only the revival) is delivered in the hearing of Christ, in the especial place of the Divine presence. He also declares that, to hear and understand it, has reference to his connexion with the Divine Being. Even the three days may have reference to the result of the law, his three days' submission to the grave.

great assemblage of his country unhonoured and unattended.—The Jewish Church was thus shown to be unfitted for his bride; and a bride was to be formed, of his own summoning; a Church, of a nature capable of perfect assimilation and alliance with his own spirit and principles.

The formation of Eve had been shown to Adam by preternatural means. He was cast into a state of sleep or trance, in which the vision was displayed to him. It is remarkable, that every display of the nature or fortunes of the Church made to the Hebrew Patriarchs, was by a vision, connected with sleep or trance. Abraham saw the sufferings of the Israelite Church in Egypt in a “horror of deep sleep,” which displayed the emblematic “furnace.” To Jacob was given, on his departure from Palestine, the vision of the “ascending and descending angels,” the development of that dispensation which was to be administered “by angels in the hand of a mediator.” And on his return, the vision of wrestling with the angel, who shrank the sinew of his limb, yet gave him a blessing, was but another development of the career of the Jewish Church, always struggling with difficulties, and in the moment of success, suddenly withered by the captivity, yet partially recovering, to be blessed with the presence of the Messiah. To Christ was similarly given, under the direct influence of the Divine Spirit, a development of the future fortunes and nature of

the Christian Church, under the three successive evils which marked its decline : the indulgence of the worldly appetite for wealth and honour, in the fourth century ; the spiritual imposture and miracle-working of the seventh ; and the ambition of universal sovereignty in the twelfth ; snares, which the purer portion of the Church defied. Thus Christ, who, from his perfect identification with the true Church, undergoes those successive temptations as her representative, triumphs over all, and finally repels the tempter<sup>1</sup>.

Immediately after the temptation, the Church of Christ begins to exist, by the calling of the disciples ; the bride is thus brought to the second Adam. And as the blessing of "increase and multiply" was given to our first parents ; the promise of a boundless offspring is given to the Church ; to the disciples it is declared by a miracle singularly expressive of abundance ; that they shall be "fishers of men."

After some interval, yet immediately preceding the removal from Paradise, Satan had tempted Adam and Eve, beginning with Eve : and the temptation was power : "Ye shall be as gods."—

<sup>1</sup> The limits of this volume preclude the larger application, of which the theory is perfectly capable. It has been already stated at some length in a former work—"The New Interpretation of the Apocalypse." With the theories of the Transfiguration and the Crucifixion, which can be but alluded to in these pages, it may form the subject of a future publication.



Towards the close of Christ's ministry, the popular zeal "would have made him a king." The minds of his disciples are seduced by the prospect; they contend among each other for supremacy, and Peter openly contradicts our Lord's declaration, that his purpose on earth was to die : a declaration for which he is sternly rebuked, in the same words which had already repelled and stigmatised the tempter—"Get thee behind me, Satan."

The distinction between Adam and Christ is, that Christ, though similarly tempted, is sinless, and vanquishes the temptation. But, in both instances, the bride is tempted first, yields, and proposes the temptation to her husband.

By attending to the close connexion of the type and the anti-type, we now arrive at the explanation of an event which has greatly perplexed all inquiry,—Christ's agony in Gethsemane. Why *He* should sorrow, who knew no sin; why he should exhibit such keen anxiety in the prospect of merely human suffering, whose whole life was a preparative for endurance; or should implore of Heaven, with the strongest signs of mental torture, the escape from a brief suffering, at its worst, borne boldly by the outcasts of society; while he had before him the rewards which made many a martyr defy the rack and the flame;—all this is singularly incompatible with the undeviating dignity of his mind, the constant and calm

avowal that crucifixion was to be his fate ; and the composure which he assumed immediately after, sustained during his trial before the priests and Pilate, and displayed even on the cross itself, to the pardoning of the penitent thief, providing for the protection of his mother, and praying for his enemies. All those imply, even in the human sense of the phrase, a mind of the highest order of manliness, self-possession, and fortitude. But, the true explanation is to be found, in his being the appointed and exact representative of Adam ; who, in his first consciousness of having brought down the Divine wrath, hid himself in terror among the trees of the garden. Christ, after the Paschal Supper, goes to the garden, and prepares himself for the agony, as a distinct portion of the task which must be undergone. The agony of our first parent must have been wrought to an indescribable pitch of horror, misery, and despair, if mental suffering is to be at all proportioned to the value of what has been lost, or the keenness of what is to be suffered. What must have been the torture of *his* mind, who felt that by a single act he had forfeited all the glories and enjoyments of existence ; that he had thrown away existence itself ; and had now only to meet the heaviest wrath of Heaven <sup>1</sup> !

<sup>1</sup> The commentators have singularly enfeebled the purport of the Agony, by conceiving it to express simply, our Lord's humility, and his personal sorrow for human sins. Bishop Hors-

The distinction of the characters, however, remains ; and where Adam was all horror and remorse, Christ mingles with his agony obedience. "Let this cup pass from me ; nevertheless, not my will, but thine be done."

But the sentence is to be passed on Adam ; and not on him alone, but on Eve, and on the serpent. Again, the connexion of the type and the anti-type explains a difficulty which has long perplexed all interpretation. Why Christ should have been crucified between *two* malefactors ; why *one* of them should have suddenly adopted the language of pious hope, while the other only broke out into scoffing and despair ; why the instant opening of

ley considers it as chiefly a 'call to man to bear misfortune patiently ; "See this good and perfect man patiently bearing our sorrows : humble thyself, arrogant philosophy, say not that affliction is not an evil ; say that it is to be borne with humility, as the punishment of sin," &c. (*Sermons.*) Paley looks upon it as an instance of the due vehemence of prayer, an intense solicitation for strength at the approach of death ; an agony of entreaty, which he strongly recommends to every one. "We find our Lord in his *last extremity* resorting to prayer, and with an earnestness, a vehemence of devotion, suited to the occasion. One great extremity at least, the hour of approaching death, is to be passed through by all ; what then ought to occupy us—prayer. Prayer with our blessed Lord was the refuge from the storm." (*Sermons.*) Such are the extravagances into which even this clear-headed writer could heat his imagination. The value of constant prayer is indisputable ; but are we to be urged to an *agony* of prayer, to the palpable mental torture, which even in Christ required the comfort of an angel ?

Paradise should have been declared in that hour of suffering; and why the dying words of the Saviour should yet have been expressive of his being under the deepest sense of Divine rejection<sup>1</sup>. All those are questions of high interest, which have exercised the mind from the earliest age, and which press upon the feelings of the Christian to this hour.

But the whole scene of suffering becomes explicable by a reference to the type. The last act of the Divine government in Paradise was the sentence of Adam. *Three* criminals there stood before the Judge: Adam, Eve, and the serpent. The three were sentenced, but the man and the woman, by the new covenant of mercy, were subjected only to temporary death; they were virtually forgiven, and prepared for entrance into the place of

<sup>1</sup> The natural reluctance of divines to admit that our Lord could have been reduced to this extremity, proposes some readings of the text which are altogether inadmissible. Lightfoot thinks that "Why hast thou forsaken me?" should be understood "Why hast thou given me into such hands?" Dr. Smith (Script. Test.) thinks that it is little more than a *general* reference to the Psalm; Rosenmuller, a mere expression or interjection of mental suffering; Dr. Clarke, an exclamation of surprise at the wickedness of the people—to what hast thou abandoned me! Others, that *vari may* mean *etc. &c.* But Scripture cannot require those dexterities. The text is unequivocal dejection, felt through unequivocal suffering; the *same* suffering which the first man felt in the misery of his guilt. How to reconcile this with Deity is not the question for human powers.

the redeemed. The third criminal, the serpent, was beyond forgiveness, and was abandoned to his full sentence of despair.—At the crucifixion, Christ retains his representative character of Adam. Though sinless, he is under the curse ; “Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree.” The heart of the penitent criminal is already of his Church, a representative of the Bride, the forgiven Eve of the lost Paradise. The heart of the scoffer and impenitent is the representative of that evil Spirit of which it has been the slave. Still the original distinction between Christ and Adam is preserved. Christ is God and man : as man he suffers, and exclaims, in the language of a being on whom the hand of eternal justice has fallen ; as God, even in that moment, he pardons the repentant sinner, and receives the soul into his kingdom <sup>1</sup>.

<sup>1</sup> The commentators have mistaken the principle of this great transaction. Bishop Sherlock thinks that the different fate of the malefactors was for the purpose of showing, by the proximity of justice and mercy, “how to fear without despair, and to trust without presumption.” (*Sermons.*) Lightfoot considers the faith of the penitent thief to have been the whole origin of the distinction. “His was a great faith, which could discover Christ under such a scorned, crucified Jesus.” Others look upon the distinction as an evidence of the exhaustless mercy of Heaven. But if this were the object, the conversion of both the malefactors would have naturally been the result. Those interpretations, too, omit all the characteristics.

## CHAPTER XLV.

### THE APOSTOLIC CHURCH.

THE parallelism continues through the history of Adam and his descendants.

Adam, departing from Paradise, is thenceforth to spend his existence in culturing the wilderness of the world ; yet not without a promise that Paradise shall again be opened when the serpent is slain.—Eve conceives, and bears a son, to whom she gives a name of triumph, “ Cain,” in the faith of the promise, that from her shall descend the Victor.—She subsequently bears another son, to whom she gives a name of feebleness, Abel.—Cain is a husbandman, Abel a shepherd.—They both come to man’s estate, and then severally offer sacrifice ; Cain a wilful sacrifice, of the fruits of his own labours ; Abel a commanded sacrifice, of the firstlings of his flock ; the former a sacrifice of works, the latter a sacrifice of faith.—Cain is indignant at the Divine preference of his brother’s offering ; rejects the Divine remonstrance ; and at length kills his brother.—He thenceforth loses the inheritance, is exiled from the presence of the

Divine Glory, and sent forth to wander through the earth, without the possibility of return, or of reclaiming the inheritance.—To Eve another son, Seth, is then born, expressly to supply the place of Abel; and thus to be the head of the sacred line, the true inheritor.—Seth establishes an unbroken succession of the true worshippers.—But degeneracy at last begins to encroach upon the Sethites, and Enoch, a prophet and preacher of righteousness, rebukes their falling away, and is finally borne to heaven.—The Sethites intermarry with the Cainites, degenerate still more, and are given over to the devastations of savage and violent tribes, until the earth is filled with violence, and a deluge sweeps all away, with the exception of the single patriarchal family.

Christianity accurately preserves the parallelism alike in the nature and order of the leading facts of its history.—The number of the disciples, during the mission of our Lord in Judæa (the type of Paradise) was unaccountably small; (but was thus the truer to the type), it was only on the departure of the Apostolic Church from Jerusálem into the Gentile world, that Christianity bore offspring. The gifts of the Holy Spirit had then qualified the apostles for exercising the commission to go and convert “all *nations*,” and it was then that the infant church was formed among the Gentiles, a church which was yet to grow to such extent and power.—Christianity exulted over its birth, and

communicated to it the new baptism, not by water alone (the original baptism of John), but by water and the spirit ; thus the new name was given in triumph, and the Bride, the original depository of the Gospel, rejoiced in having gotten “ the man from the Lord,” the destined destroyer of the kingdom of Satan on the earth.—The church of the Gentiles grew in vigour and opulence ; its characteristic was earthly exertion : it was a tamer of the soil, a gatherer of the fruits of the world.—But, as another son was to be born of the Bride, and bear the name of weakness ; so another church was to arise, offering in its poverty, obscurity, and suffering, the strongest contrast to the opulence, distinction, and luxury of the elder offspring of Christianity.

About the year 660, the denial of the Scriptures to the laity in the Eastern church, corresponding with the formation of the Canon of the Mass by Gregory the Second in the Western, produced the Reformers, chiefly called Paulicians in the East, and the predecessors of the Waldenses in the West. With both the Bible was the sole standard ; both were poor, but singularly zealous ; both peasantry, and the principal occupation of the European portion was the keeping of sheep. The Paulicians, charged with Manichæism<sup>1</sup> (which they always

<sup>1</sup> It is evident that the historians of both the East and West confounded the extravagances of some of the fanatics, who always appear at the dawn of religious reform, with the purer portions of the reformers. Luther might as well have been charged with



repelled as a calumny), and severely persecuted by the Eastern branch of the paramount church, fled into Europe, and joining with their brethren, in the beginning of the eleventh century, formed the Church of the first Reformation. The question between the two Churches now, was distinctly relative to the means of obtaining the atonement of human sin. The Church of Rome, which had already assumed the supremacy over the East and West alike, placed those means in the mass, and the intercession of saints. The Church of the Waldenses denied their efficacy, and rested upon faith and prayer. It was the original question of sacrifice *by works* and sacrifice *by faith*; brought once more to a decision. During the controversy, many powerful minds vindicated the scriptural doctrine. They were persecuted and silenced.—At length, the result of the controversy was persecution of the most remorseless kind. Armies were let loose upon the Reformers, the Inquisition was established, to extirpate them still more effectually; and in the thirteenth century, they were completely extinguished as a body. The Abel was slain. The Church which had shrunk from the

the violences and absurdities of the German Anabaptists. But the distinction between the Paulicians and Manichæism seems to be impassable. The Paulicians made the reading of the Scriptures an universal duty; the Manichæans denied the entire of the Old Testament, and almost the entire of the New. What distinction could practically be more decided?

altar of human merits, penances, works of supererogation, and the intercession of saints and angels, was destroyed *by the sword*.—From this period the ceremonial and doctrines against which Protestantism most strongly objects, advanced with an unrestrained progress in the Church of Rome. Its temporal power, at the close of the persecution of the Waldenses, was unrivalled ; yet it is not less remarkable, that from this period it unequivocally declined. Its frame exhibited the stamp of exile. From the beginning of the thirteenth century to its close, from Innocent III. to the accession of Boniface VIII. in 1294, the dominion of the Pontiffs had been supreme. “From this epocha that extraordinary power over human opinion has been subsiding, for five centuries.”—But, as another son was to be born, “instead of Abel, whom Cain slew ;” so another Church was to arise, holding the same principle with the extinguished one, though not suffering the same fate ; but establishing a line of successful purity and adherence to the original principle. In A.D. 1517, the Church of the German Reformation openly commenced its protest against the paramount Church ; persevered through all difficulties, and finally established Protestantism in Europe.

The ante-diluvian record, in its brevity, had stated but one event between the birth of Seth and the intermarriages of the Sethite population with the descendants of Cain ; that event was the prophe-

syng and ascent of Enoch. In the Christian era there is no similar event in a *material* shape, but it has its representative, perfectly adapted to the character of the era, which is spirituality.—The Christian Enoch is the Bible, the “Two Witnesses prophesying in sackcloth,” through the long period of Christian degeneracy, and protesting against the growing guilt of the world.—They are at length overpowered by the violence of infidelity, but, at the moment of apparent extinction, are exalted in sudden triumph to a state of freedom and security beyond all future restraint of man. This memorable evidence of the Divine power *has existed* in our own day, in the extraordinary diffusion of the Scriptures; the final breaking of the chains that had fettered their freedom since the commencement of the Papal supremacy<sup>1</sup>.

From this event, all, *to us*, is future. The subsequent events of the ante-diluvian series were, an universal prevalence of corruption, resulting from the guilty and humiliating connection of the pos-

<sup>1</sup> Apoc. c. xi. The reference of this chapter is still more distinct to the history of Elijah, the Enoch of the Jewish dispensation; yet only from our more detailed knowledge of the latter. The periods and duties of both distinctly correspond in the Patriarchal and Jewish series, both are similarly employed, similarly thwarted, and similarly raised to heaven. It is true, that in the Apocalyptic chapter the Two Witnesses are represented as dead, by violence; yet it is but for three days and a half, and they are not put into the grave. They suddenly spring up from this brief period of death, and ascend to glory and power beyond man.

sessors of the true faith with the rejected line ; then a resulting reign of violence ; then a resulting vast infliction of the Divine wrath ; then a deluge, destroying both the corruptors and the corrupted, and leaving only a small remnant, divinely rescued ; then universal empire in the hands of that remnant ; then a violent rebellion of their descendants, finally broken up by the distinct agency of Heaven.

Those events have already been *twice* realized ; in the ante-diluvian era, in a material and visible shape ; in the Jewish, in part visibly, by the rapid vices and final havoc of the nation, and the actual elevation of the rescued remnant (the Church of the true Israel, under the name of Christianity,) to universal religious authority ; and in part spiritually, by the exclusion of the Jewish nation from the Gospel before their fall, and the spiritual nature of that dominion to which alone the primitive Church preferred a claim. Their realization in the future years of Christianity must be developed only by time <sup>1</sup>.

<sup>1</sup> The controversy between the Reformers and Rome on the sacrifice by works and by faith, was drawn closer still. The Eucharist, the only Christian sacrifice, had early become an object of singular innovation. The Treatise of Paschasius Radbert in 831, first embodied the Romish doctrines of the actual change of the Sacrament into the flesh and blood of Christ. He was vigorously opposed even by those of his own Church, with the famous Rabanus Maurus at their head. From transubstantiation naturally proceeded the doctrine of adoring the host, and finally, the denial of the cup to the laity ; a practice which excluded the very symbol of the *blood*, the peculiar sign of *sacrifice*.

## CHAPTER XLVI.

### CHRISTENDOM.

THE correspondence of the Christian era with the Jewish, displays the providential Government in a still more striking point of view, because in a series more minute, defined, and abundant in events. But the distinction is observable, (arising from the *spirituality* of the era,) that the spirit of the *events* constitutes the principal object. Thus, the work of Moses, the prophet, meek and holy, is done in the corresponding era, by the intrepidity and decision of the soldier, Constantine ; thus, the work of David and Solomon, the models of heroism and wisdom, is done by the dubious valour and perplexed intelligence of Justinian. Still, even in those examples, the authentic resemblance is sustained ; if we have not the likeness in the separate features, we have it in the outline ; the variety natural to remoteness of descent is there ; but the general expression amply vindicates the origin.

The parallelism of the Jewish and Christian

eras ascends to the highest point of Jewish history. The leading events of both can alone be given in this summary.—A Divine promise of offspring was announced to Abraham on his first entering Palestine, with a declaration that his descendants should be innumerable<sup>1</sup>.—Sarah, impatient at the delay of the promise, intreated him to give her offspring by Hagar.—Hagar, with her child Ishmael, began her course in affliction, was driven into the wilderness, was guided to a place of rest by an angel, and received the mingled and partial blessing, that her son should be a wild man, with his hand against every man, and every man's against his; but that, notwithstanding, the universal hostility should not be suffered to extinguish him; he should “dwell in the presence of his brethren<sup>2</sup>.”—On a subsequent occasion, the promise of offspring by Sarah was renewed.—Abraham prayed for Ishmael: he was answered, that Ishmael should be made the father of twelve princes, and of a great nation, but still, with *Isaac only* should the covenant be established. It was at the same time declared,

<sup>1</sup> Gen. xiii. 15, 16.

<sup>2</sup> This promise, of course, primarily referred to the Arab habits which were to mark the personal descendants of Ishmael. But the exact application of a type, formed on grounds so remote from the Jewish polity, as the lawless, roving, and half savage manners of Arabia, is a most remarkable instance of the Divine system.

that the names of the Patriarch and his wife were changed into others, expressive of a boundless posterity.—The immediate birth of the promised offspring was next announced by angels; and Isaac was born.—While yet a youth, he was on the point of being put to death, but was saved by Divine interposition.—He became the father of Jacob, from whom proceeded the future lords of Palestine.—The sons of Jacob, pressed by famine, took refuge in Egypt.—There their way had been prepared by one of their brethren, Joseph.—In Egypt, they lived separate from the Egyptians, and pursued their occupation as shepherds.—In a succeeding reign, they were subjected to bondage. The bondage grew intolerable; and their cry summoned the Divine compassion to their aid.—A succession of tremendous inflictions on the tyrannical government and people, compelled the remission of this bondage.—The Egyptian king, terrified by the scene of death round him, finally urged them to be gone, and even solicited their blessing. “Take your flocks and herds, and be gone, and *bless me also*<sup>1</sup>.”—The people went forth triumphantly, and led by the pillar of flame.—They were pursued by the king and his army, who followed them into the channel of the sea; and who, in sight of the spot where the Israelites had reached the land, were totally destroyed.

<sup>1</sup> Exod. xii. 32.

At this point, from which commences the Mosaic dispensation, we pause a moment, to exhibit the connexion of the two series.

The history of Christianity is older than that of Judæism.—The result of the great covenant of mercy was an original promise to mankind, that a Church should exist, which, born in Palestine, should finally encompass all nations.—But, while the birth of this promised offspring was delayed, another Church, by its nature illegitimate, came into being in Palestine. This is the distinction taken by St. Paul, between the offspring of Hagar and the offspring of Sarah—the child of the bondwoman and the child of the free; “For it is written that Abraham had two sons, the one by a bondmaid, the other by a free woman. Which things are an allegory: for those are the two covenants; the one from Mount Sinai, which gendereth to bondage, which is Hagar. For this Sinai is Mount Sinai in Arabia, and answereth to Jersualet, which now is, and is in bondage with her children<sup>1</sup>.”—At length, by the voice of the Deity himself, the promise of the Christian Church was renewed; with a declaration of its boundless future extent.—But a blessing on the Jewish Church was granted, in the form of a promise, that it should constitute the worship of twelve tribes, “twelve princes,” forming a

<sup>1</sup> Gal. iv. 22, &c.



powerful nation. A previous declaration had stated the character of the people; that they should be fierce, intractable, and separate from all other nations; “a wild man;” but that, in the midst of the universal alienation which they thus felt and thus provoked, they should still be sustained. But, it was declared, that the true Covenant was *not* for the Church of the Law, but for the Church of the Promise, yet to be born.—At length it was divinely announced that the birth was at hand. The announcement was received by Judæa, as by Sarah; the promise had been delayed until the land was in her old age, and at once incapable, and contemptuous, of the birth. But the power of Heaven interposed, and, at the time appointed from the beginning, the Christian Church was miraculously born.—While still young, it was, like Isaac, on the point of being slain in Jerusalem. But, like him, it was saved, in the same spot, by the protection of God, who had also provided a sacrifice for himself in its stead. On the seizure of Christ, the infirm Church had instantly dispersed, and seemed to be on the point of extinction; but, on the sacrifice of Him who was the Paschal Lamb, the great substitute and atoner, it reassembled, received new strength, and commenced a new career; it had been Isaac, a scorn and public “derision;” it was now to be Israel, “prevailing with God;” a possessor of power and success with God and man.—But the

chief Jews still persecuted Christianity; and it began to withdraw from Jerusalem, and take refuge in the Gentile world. (It will be observed, that during the entire conduct of this delicate, and yet most significant, allegory, the same images are used for the Church of bondage and the Church of freedom; the spirit of Christianity having, in fact, always existed in Israel, however veiled by the forms and ordinances of the Mosaic dispensation.) The Church of the Twelve, in the distress of Palestine, *the Roman war*, at length migrated from the land of its fathers, into the land of a strange nation, powerful, rich, and learned, beyond all others, the great Gentile empire; where its coming had been provided for by the sojourn and distinction of one of its own kindred. This instance is singularly clear and powerful.

St. Paul was the direct representative of Joseph. The fidelity with which the characteristics of the Patriarch are reflected in the life of the Apostle, was unquestionably an object of design.—Joseph was the favourite son of his house, the son of old age, the brother of Benjamin. St. Paul was distinguished by the confidence, and was employed on the mission, of the Sanhedrin and the High Priest; he was of the purest stock, a “Hebrew of the Hebrews, of the tribe of *Benjamin*, as touching the Law, a Pharisee.”—A sudden mark of honour, a coat of many colours, a clothing of peculiar

costliness or beauty, given exclusively to Joseph, excited the hostility of his brethren. It was further excited by his own declaration of a dream, in which he saw all his brethren doing homage to his superiority. Inflamed with jealousy, they would have put him to death ; but they finally sold him into Egyptian slavery. St. Paul, on his journey to fulfil the mission of the Sanhedrin, was surrounded by the splendours of the Divine presence, was clothed with the robe of light and inspiration, the “glory of the Lord.” From that time he became an object of Jewish resentment. But his powers and zeal in his new cause, his open assertions of the superiority of the religion and office with which he was intrusted, and his vehement exposure of the cold and worn-out formalities of the Doctors of the Law, roused universal wrath among his countrymen. Their instant determination was, to put him to death ; to which many of them bound themselves by an oath ; but he was taken out of their hands.

The closeness of detail in the correspondence is striking. Joseph has been sent by his father “to see whether it be well with the brethren, and well with their flock ;” his brethren seeing him coming, “conspire against him to slay him,” and to slay him for his revelations. “Behold this *dreamer* cometh.” They determine to kill him, and thus put an end to the fulfilment of his words : “We shall see what will become of his

*dreams.*" Reuben desires to save him, and advises that they should throw him into a pit, "that he might rid him out of their hands, to deliver him to his father again." His brethren strip him of his coat of honour, and let him down to perish. But, "there is no water in the pit," and he is uninjured. While he continues there, the Ishmaelite merchants are seen, carrying their goods towards Egypt. Reuben had gone away previously, leaving him in the pit: Judah then recommends that they should not bring their brother's blood on their heads, but should sell him. The advice is taken, and he is sent as a slave into Egypt, which they consider as precluding all return; for they declare to his father that he has been slain. Jacob mourns for him, as for one whose loss is not to be recompensed: his guilty sons offer him comfort, but he refuses all consolation.

St. Paul, clothed in the garb of an Apostle, went forth to visit the shepherds and the flock of Israel, by the command of the great Father of all. The Jews conspired to slay him, and slay him especially for his doctrines; naturally conceiving, that the extinction of so zealous a missionary would be of signal service in impeding the progress of his religion. He fell into their hands, was brought before the tribunal, and there accused of being a "mover of sedition, a pestilent fellow, and ringleader of the Naza-

renes ;” thus stripping him of the honours of his Apostleship. They acknowledge that “ they would have judged him according to their law,” as a profaner of the Temple, if he had not been forcibly taken out of their hands by the soldiery. Felix, the Roman governor, was connected by marriage with the nation, “ his wife Drusilla being a Jewess.” He heard Paul with partial conviction—listened and “ trembled.” He gave him into the custody of a centurion, with orders to treat him gently, and intended to set him at liberty, but yet delayed this act of justice through personal motives : “ he hoped that money should have been given him of Paul, that he might *loose him.*” Felix was recalled from his government ; and, “ willing to do the Jews a pleasure, *left Paul bound.*”

In the governorship of Festus, his successor, Paul claimed his right of appeal to the emperor. This prevented his being sent “ to Jerusalem, to be tried there,” which saved his life, for the Jews had resolved to kill him on the way. Yet he might have lain all his life in prison, but for the arrival of king Agrippa, a Jew, the son of Herod Agrippa. Before him, as peculiarly conversant with the law, Paul was publicly examined ; and by him it was declared, that “ this man might have been set at liberty if he had not appealed to Cæsar.” Why the appeal which had been adopted by St. Paul as a protection for his life,

should have been turned into an obstacle to his liberty, is not easily to be conceived ; unless we are to regard king Agrippa as willing to avail himself of a legal artifice, to save at once his conscience and his popularity. The result was, that Paul was sent as a *prisoner* to Rome. There his bonds could not restrain his heroic zeal ; he preached the Gospel, and continually explained the prophecies of the Messiah, to many ; and among those, converted some of rank in the palace, “ saints of Cæsar’s household.” At the close of two years he was set at liberty, and immediately recommenced his progress through the empire, to prepare the way for the establishment of Christianity. He sailed to Syria, rapidly passed through Asia Minor, and returned through Macedonia, Achaia, and Corinth, to Rome. His anxiety was evidently centered in Rome, where he had founded a Church containing a “ vast multitude<sup>1</sup> ;” where it seems to have been revealed

<sup>1</sup> “ *Ingens multitudo*,” is the expression of Tacitus, describing the Christians of the persecution, in A. D. 65, the year of St. Paul’s death.

This great Apostle, who “ laboured more abundantly than them all,” is supposed to have been slain by Nero’s order, for his conversions in the palace, and to have died by the sword, as a Roman citizen ; while St. Peter was crucified as a Jew, and, according to tradition, with his head downwards, by his own desire, as being unworthy to die in the same manner as his Master. St. Paul was beheaded at Aquæ Salvæ, three miles from Rome, and buried about two miles on the Via Ostensis,

to him that he was to die, and where he was martyred in the same year<sup>1</sup>.

This termination of his career was unlike the tranquil prosperity of Joseph's latter days; but the active and important portion of both their lives was the same: the chief distinction thus being, that, after Joseph had completed the establishment of the Israelites in Egypt, he was permitted to enjoy a period of rest on earth; while St. Paul's whole life was absorbed in his mission, and his Sabbath was reserved for the place of those spirits who await the coming of their Lord.

The minute exactness of those circumstances, so apparently unimportant to the general narrative, yet so admirably adapted to mark identity, is demonstrative of design: and this design also furnishes an answer to a very striking question.

The peculiarity of St. Paul's mission must naturally excite inquiry. The services of a zealous and learned missionary, in propagating a religion, cannot be a matter of doubt; but why there was but one such missionary, for a purpose which throws all later missions into eclipse; why, instead of one St. Paul, there were not a hundred; why, with the publicity of the religion so dependent

where Constantine reared a Church to his memory, which was repaired by Theodosius.

<sup>1</sup> A. D. 65.

on its preachers, but a single Jew of any eminence for knowledge, vigour, and intellectual power, should have been sent to give the Gospel to the whole West—to that portion of the globe in which resided all the elements of human dominion and mental activity, in which was the centre of empire, and in which was to be the centre of the Church; why St. Peter, the highly honoured Apostle, the bearer of the keys, and whose two Epistles prove him a master of manly eloquence and sacred wisdom, should have been restricted to the narrow and comparatively stagnant circle of Asia Minor, while a Jew of Tarsus should have been sent forth alone to scatter Divine knowledge, like sparkles of flame, as he hurried on through Europe; are questions of difficulty. The remaining Apostles finished their course in the obscurity appointed by the Divine will. Even Titus and Timothy, Barnabas, and the other coadjutors of St. Paul, were but slightly known. May not a chief reason of this extraordinary selection have been, to show the unity of the Divine plan in both dispensations? For even a second missionary of the same rank, would have defaced the exactness of the correspondence. But, by restricting the mission to St. Paul, we find the leading lineaments of Joseph's career renewed with a living clearness in the history of the *one* great Apostle of the Gentiles.

Why his mission should have been urged with



such fervid impetuosity through the Gentile world at that moment; is perhaps to be best accounted for by the necessity of providing an immediate place of shelter for the Church. It was known to Heaven, though not to man, that within a few years the Church would be forced to fly from Palestine; not simply from the persecutions of Judah, but from her ruin; Palestine was to be given into the hands of the spoiler. When the false Israel was to perish, the true Israel must be a fugitive; and, to provide against the catastrophe, which was now rolling on the wheels, the invisible, but resistless wheels, of vengeance, the second Joseph was sent, speeding before it through the world.

The condition of the Christian Church thenceforth, in the Gentile territory, closely represented that of the Israelite in Egypt.—It kept aloof from the corruptions of the idolator. It still was a teacher of Revelation, a shepherd of the sheep; and its habits were a subject of scorn, and even of hatred, to the proud and dissolute man of Rome. “The shepherd” was still an abomination to the Egyptians.

In Egypt, the oppression was gradual, but it took a definite and exterminating shape, in the decree for the murder of the Hebrew infants, about eighty years before the liberation.—The fluctuations of imperial cruelty to the Church were fixed by the similar decree of Trajan, in the be-

ginning of the second century, declaring Christianity a *capital crime*. The oppression thenceforth deepened, until the cry of the Church reached the Divine Throne. Then came the new Plagues, that were to force Rome, by suffering, to set its bond slaves free. They were on a scale proportioned to the magnitude and the guilt of the empire.

With the murder of Alexander Severus, commenced the "Era of Desolation." In a former chapter, a glance has been given at those agonies of empire. They were worthy to punish the iniquities of imperial Paganism. Strongly built as were the ramparts of Roman polity, they seemed all to give way at once, and every shape of vice and baseness rushed over the ruins to plunder at will. But the diadem was the grand temptation; the soil was covered with a sudden flood of regal slaughter, and every surge bore, or submerged, an usurper. This dreadful struggle of the passions lasted for almost half a century, pausing only to gather force for renewed violence, and then bursting out into conflicts that threatened to crush the last resources of the state.

It was remarkable, that in this peculiar period the Church underwent a succession of sufferings, which regularly preceded, and *alternated* with, the successive calamities of the empire.—Maximin, the assassin of Severus, first, began a furious persecution of the Christians, as favourites of the

late emperor ; then followed a general havoc of Pagan life, sacrificed to the fears and passions of this crowned savage ; on his fall, the Church had rest for twelve years, and the emperor Philip protected it so publicly, that he was charged with being a convert.—Decius next renewed the persecution with furious violence. In two years of faction he died (A.D. 253) ; the Church then had rest for three years.—Valerian next renewed the persecution. He and his army were cut off by the Persians ; and the Church again had rest under Gallienus and his successors, a period of nearly forty years. Yet from the usurpation of Maximin to the close of the reign of Gallienus, the general misery of the Pagans was unspeakable. For the first eighteen years of the reign even of Dioclesian, Christianity was comparatively protected ; the fiercer spirit of persecution was restrained, and the Church “grew and mightily prevailed.” But the original process was at length to be renewed, with still more distinct evidence of the retaliation of Christian suffering by the immediate suffering of Paganism.

The earlier part of the reign of Dioclesian was prosperous alike for the Church and the empire. The four chief officers or governors of the imperial household were Christian ; even his empress Prisca and his daughter Valeria were Christian. The palace and all the high public employments were filled with avowed believers in the faith of Christ.

The bishops were treated with some respect by the law. During this period the empire flourished. The long and arduous struggle with Persia had been terminated by the memorable defeat of Narses, and the more memorable treaty by which Mesopotamia and the five provinces beyond the Tigris were ceded for ever to Rome. The whole was crowned with the pomp of a Roman triumph (A.D. 303). The tributary world did homage in that magnificent display to the majesty of the empire; the emblems of Africa, Britain, the Rhine, the Danube, and the Nile, were followed by an evidence of victory still more surprising to the popular eye, the children of "the great king," the captive sons and household of the Persian monarch, whose name had so long been a terror to the empire. It was the last triumph that ever marched to the capitol.

But in the same year, the last and heaviest of the persecutions began. The violent spirit of Galerius inflaming the frigid philosophy of his companion in empire, then devastated the Church for ten years. Immediately after the commencement of this atrocious cruelty, Dioclesian was seized with an illness, which compelled him to resign the throne (A.D. 305), at Nicomedia, where the first blow of the persecution had been struck. After nine years of solitude, he died, towards the close of the persecution; his latter years were embittered by domestic anxieties, and he is even

supposed to have become insane, and died by his own hand.

But the public retaliation too had come, and in its prescribed order. "The abdication of Dioclesian and Maximian was followed by eighteen years of discord and confusion. The empire was afflicted by civil wars<sup>1</sup>." At the end of this torment the deliverer of the Church was summoned.

The whole period of the Persecutions might justify the amplest detail that could be given by the most vivid and learned pen of history ; but here their coincidence alone can be alluded to. In the actual retaliatory sufferings of Rome, there was but little direct resemblance to those of Egypt ; but subjects so singularly distinct required a distinction of means. Empire spreading over the world was not to be chastised by the local vengeance that might sweep the valley of the Nile. War, which extends with such universal power of ruin ; war, the great plastic evil. which can as easily crush an empire as a province ; the unsparing conflagration, which alike grasps the patriarchs of the forest, and consumes the weed on the ground ; war, alone capable of perpetual revival, and perpetual havoc, alike in every climate, age, and condition of mankind ; was the only minister of punishment to which the *continued* exaction of the penalty of imperial crime

<sup>1</sup> Gibbon, vol. ii.

could be committed, without a miracle. And war was the minister.

Still there was a resemblance. The war was *followed* by earthquakes, storms, and meteors, and the *last* visitation was the great pestilence, the "slaying of the first-born," the fearful havoc which prostrated one half of mankind.

But the resemblance was more conspicuous in its *order*. It might have been previously conceived, that when persecution was once let loose by Pagan fury and imperial power, it would have persevered until it extinguished the obnoxious sect. But we find in Rome, as in Egypt, the persecution of the Church constantly connected with public suffering, and the persecution then suddenly stopped; as if the terror which wrought the brief repentance of Pharaoh had checked the habitual tyranny of the Cæsar. A period of tranquillity then followed. The imperial heart then hardened itself once more. The same order then recurred, and this course continued during almost half a century. But there remained two, still more peculiar, features of the Egyptian visitation; the character of the Jewish leader; and the final, consummate overthrow of Pharaoh in the Red Sea.

It would be but a coarse conception of the infinite resources and incomparable wisdom of Providence, to determine that in producing a similarity of result, it must be always limited to a

similarity of means ; that what has been once done by a priest or a prophet, must be done by the hands of a priest or a prophet through all time. The true evidence of Divine superiority is to be looked for in the direct reverse of the conception ; in producing the same results by instruments of the most boundless variety.

Constantine in Rome does the work of Moses in Egypt. Nothing can be more different than the two characters. The young, bold, vivid, and practised warrior stands on one side ; the ancient, mild, reluctant, and unwarlike shepherd on the other. But, above them both, and enrobing both for their mission in the same descended flame from heaven, stands a Power, to which strength and weakness are one ; which extracts its praise from the lip of infancy, as from the lip of the prophet and the sage ; whose oracles are uttered as deeply in “ the still, small voice,” as in the thunders.

Still, dissimilar as Moses and Constantine are to the eye, kindred peculiarities are impressed on both, which guide the mind to their unity of purpose.

Moses was born in Egypt, yet among the tribes of Israel ; and of parentage in a state of obscurity, yet of the race of Levi, one of the “ princes of Israel.” In infancy he was taken from his mother, and adopted as the son of the Egyptian princess. He thenceforth remained separate from

his family, and at the court of Egypt. He there became distinguished as a warrior and a statesman; "he was mighty in words and deeds." But, in the midst of national favour, he suddenly abandoned the court to return to his tribe; a return which ended in his withdrawing into the wilderness. There he received the support and alliance of Jethro, a native chief. He finally offered himself as a leader to his people, and required that they should acknowledge his authority. Having been thus appointed their representative, he demanded of Pharaoh that they should be suffered to go, with him at their head, in freedom into the wilderness. The demand was met with scorn and indignation. Yet on its repetition, the king, in fear, suffered him to approach, as the representative of the Israelites, but altogether rejected the idea of their independence. Previously to this period, his brother Aaron, who inherited the superiority by birth, was formally made subordinate to him. The independence of the people was at last obtained. Moses at their head marched for the wilderness, with the pillar of flame before him as his guide, and the promise of Divine protection. But the Egyptians violated their compact, followed, and were destroyed within sight of the shore where the Israelites first established their polity and religion. Moses led them to the borders of Canaan; but the conquest was achieved by Joshua.



The chief features of Constantine's career observe a close and unequivocal correspondence with those of the Jewish leader. Constantius, the father of Constantine, was the son of a chief noble of Dardania, and of the niece of the emperor Claudius; but at the time of his son's birth he was undistinguished by *title*, and his wife Helena was the daughter of an innkeeper<sup>1</sup>. Constantine was born probably in Dacia<sup>2</sup>. While still in boyhood he was *separated* from his mother, Constantius having been appointed one of the Cæsars, and on that occasion having been compelled to divorce his wife, and receive the hand of the emperor's daughter. Constantine was thus made the *son of the princess*. Constantius was now appointed governor of the West, but "his son, instead of following him, *remained* in the service of the emperor Dioclesian, signalized his valour in the wars of Egypt and Persia, and gradually rose to the ho-

<sup>1</sup> Gibbon, vol. ii. The succeeding quotations in the text are from his sketch of Constantine.

<sup>2</sup> The question has been the source of some dispute. The British antiquarians are strenuous for the birth of Constantine in this country, quoting the words "Britannias illic *oriendo* nobiles fecisti." This, however, Gibbon thinks, is equally applicable to his accession. His opinion is, that Constantine was born in Dacia; on the authority of an "anonymous writer," and of Firmicius, "the integrity of whose text," and even "the application of whose words" are denied. Those seem feeble grounds, yet they are stronger than conjecture.

nourable station of a tribune of the first order<sup>1</sup>. He was intrepid in war, affable in peace, and he appeared cold to the allurements of pleasure." Constantine was at length forced to leave the court, and he returned to his *kindred*. "The favour of the people and soldiers, who had named him as a worthy candidate for the rank of Cæsar, had served only to exasperate the wrath of Galerius," the joint emperor with Dioclesian. Constantine found his father and family in Gaul, but went with them *still further* west, into Britain<sup>2</sup>, where he remained until the death of Constantius, and where the event occurred of his being "reinforced by a numerous body of barbarian troops, Alemanni, under the command of one of their *hereditary chieftains*." "This was remarkable," the historian observes, "as being perhaps the *first* instance of a barbarian king who assisted the Roman arms with an independent

<sup>1</sup> The Tribune was the Commandant of the Legion. The Legion, in the time of Trajan, was about 5,500 men, an "army corps" of infantry, cavalry, and military engines, the ancient artillery. The rank of tribune of the first order might be equivalent to that of the modern "General of Division."

<sup>2</sup> Britain was regarded as the remotest point of the world, "*toto divisos orbe Britannos*." It was at this time literally *beyond* the verge of the empire, it having been seized by Carausius, who had for several years established himself as king of the island. It was reduced by Constantius and his son. To the Romans it was the wilderness, in every sense of the word.

body of his own subjects." On the death of his father, Constantine refused "to show himself to the troops until they were prepared to salute him with the names of Augustus and Emperor."

Having thus substantiated his right to be at the head of his father's government, Constantine announced his elevation, remotely and by letter, in the first instance, to the emperor, and *required his acknowledgment of the claim*. The claim was treated with indignation: "The first emotions of Galerius were those of surprise, disappointment, and rage; and he loudly threatened that he would commit to the flames both the letter and the messenger." But his rage subsequently gave way to his fear; and "when he had weighed the character and strength of his adversary, he accepted him as the sovereign of the countries beyond the Alps, but he gave him only the title of Cæsar, and the *fourth rank* among the Roman princes." The children of his father's imperial marriage were entitled "to have a preference over the meaner extraction of the son of Helena." But Constantine was formally appointed to the eldership; "his *superior* merit had been *allowed and ratified* by the dying emperor." In his last moments, Constantius "had conjured him to assume both the authority and the sentiments of a father with regard to the children of Theodora." Galerius, tortured, like Pharaoh, with insects and ulcers, finally ordered the persecution of the Christ-

ians to cease throughout the empire ; and even implored their prayers ; like Pharaoh, in the terrors of the final plague, beseeching a blessing from Israel. This epoch too was signalized by a *sudden and heavy demand* on the wealth of Paganism ; not, it is true, by Constantine, but by Maxentius ; yet the effect, as a penalty on the persecutors, was the same. The independence of Constantine and the West had been established ; Constantine and Licinius holding the greater part of Europe ; Maximin and Maxentius, holding Asia, Africa, and Italy. Maxentius suddenly gave an example of confiscation on the largest scale. He covered the Roman provinces of Africa with informers, charged the rich and noble with conspiracy, and robbed them of their estates. “ The wealth of Rome supplied an inexhaustible fund for his vain and prodigal expences ; and it was under his reign that the method of exacting a *free gift* from the senators was first invented : and as the sum was insensibly increased, the pretences of levying it were proportionably multiplied<sup>1</sup>. ”

But the final blow was still to be given. The

<sup>1</sup> Gibbon quotes the “ Panegyrics,” for the public opinion of this enormous extraction of the old spoils of Rome. “ The riches which Rome had accumulated in a period of 1060 years, were lavished by the tyrant on his mercenary bands.” It is pronounced a “ civile latrocinium.” Whatever the instruments were, the refunding was well due from the plunderers of the world.

Emperor Maxentius had soon begun to break the compact by which the government of Constantine was declared independent. He gathered the forces of his empire, and prepared to overwhelm him. Constantine attempted to negociate, but was rapidly forced to hostilities. The difficulty of the time was appalling; but he marched with an unabated spirit. In this march, which must decide his fate, he was, like Moses, led to victory by the “Celestial Sign.” The pillar of light, which guided the Israelites through their dangers, was visible in front of the host of Constantine. The Sign of the “Angel Jehovah,” which led the chosen people, had changed neither its nature nor its purposes, when it shone as the Sign of the *Son of Man*, at the head of the army of Christianity. In that Sign he conquered; and a single day of battle made him master of the capital of the Pagan world. But another blow was to be struck. Licinius, a powerful and daring adversary, still divided the empire. Constantine, with the Labarum, the representative of the Divine standard, borne at the head of his troops; fought, and totally extinguished his immense army. The war was closed by the total defeat of the last host of Paganism on the heights of Chrysopolis<sup>1</sup>, on the Asiatic side of the Hellespont;—on those waters which divide the East and West, and within sight of that

<sup>1</sup> Now Scutari.

spot where the first Christian city was raised ; the first spot where Christianity, free and triumphant by the Divine guidance, set her foot upon firm ground.

The triumph was begun ; but Canaan was not yet conquered ; Paganism was still the religion of the empire. Constantine was empowered alone to establish the general frame and authority of the faith ; he built his goodly city, but it was still in the wilderness ; Constantinople was Christian ; but the mighty strength of Rome was Pagan. The possession of the Christian Palestine was to be achieved only by a future conqueror. Theodosius was the Joshua who overthrew Paganism. The homage of their day united both conquerors in the name of " Great." And if it was ever earned by man, it was earned by the first champion of Christianity, and the final subverter of Paganism.

## CHAPTER XLVII.

### BABYLON.

THE unexpected length to which this volume has already extended, must preclude more than a glance at the vast and important period since the days of Constantine; leaving it for other occasions, to trace the full and exact affinity of the fortunes of the Israelites in the wilderness with those of the primitive Church; and of the Philistine wars with the long conflicts of civilization and barbarism, which followed the fall of the Western Empire. The only points which can now be touched, and scarcely more than touched, are the Captivity, the Restoration, and the reign of Alexander; severally holding the same positions, effecting the same purposes, and exhibiting the same circumstances, which characterise the Papal supremacy, the Reformation, and the reign of Napoleon, the close of the long career of Papal persecution.

The Emperor Justinian by his arms had recovered the patrimony of the Church from the

barbarians. The West and East were reunited under one sovereign. By his celebrated edict, (A. D. 533.) he had also placed the universal Church under one head. . Having thus effected, in all external circumstances, the two-fold purpose for which David had fought and Solomon legislated, he concluded a long, active, and singularly mingled career. Beginning in obscurity, and rising into distinction by public services ; perplexed with war, yet constantly advancing in the magnitude of his successes ; still more perplexed with religious debate, yet constantly advancing to the general establishment of his religious objects ; beginning with orthodoxy, sinking in his latter days into heresy ; signalizing his early zeal by activity against Arianism, degrading his mature wisdom by homage to the Virgin and St. Michael ; he died ; at once leaving in his life the melancholy example of human weakness ; and in his famous Code, the principles of a legislation which has been long extolled, as one of the most solid monuments of human wisdom. But if, like Solomon, he stained his sceptre by heresy, like him he left it to be broken by rebellion. At the death of Solomon, the Jewish nation still formed one sovereignty. But idols had been tolerated by his example ; and they gradually became the objects of popular homage. Jeroboam revolted at the head of the ten tribes ; and the sovereignty was divided for ever. His



first act was to erect two chief idols as substitutes for the worship of Jerusalem. He was pronounced thenceforth the “man who made Israel to sin.” A war of unexampled slaughter followed ; but the idolatrous kingdom stood, until it was finally given into the hands of Babylon, B. C. 721.—From that captivity it never returned.

The kingdom of Judah resisted longer. It sometimes destroyed the images, sometimes relapsed into their worship. At length it was punished by an army of the tribes of the desert, Syrians, Moabites, Ammonites, and Chaldeans. A further punishment fell upon it in the storm of Jerusalem (B. C. 528.) It was then carried wholly into captivity.

The veneration of saints and martyrs had menaced the Church at an early period. It was sometimes vigorously denounced ; but, from the death of Justinian, it had rapidly returned.—Gregory the Second, Bishop of Rome, revolted from the Greek emperor on the ground of an imperial command forbidding image worship ; The Pope declared that “ Rome revered as a God on earth the image of Peter.” The relics of St. Peter and St. Paul became the *two-fold* chief objects of veneration. A war of great bloodshed followed, in which the emperor was forced to relinquish his authority over Rome. Charlemagne (A. D. 800) gave the Popedom its final supremacy. From that epoch the dark ages began in Europe ;

the power of excommunication extinguished all spiritual liberty; the Scriptures were unknown. The Western Church was in the dungeons of the captivity. From that captivity, Rome has never returned. She still retains images on her altar, still exercises spiritual despotism, and still refuses the Scriptures to the people.

The history of the Eastern Church forms a striking contrast to the precipitate criminality of the Western; and follows, with not less exactitude, the career of Judah. The emperor, Leo III. had attempted to purify the universal Church of image worship: the result was the rebellion of Rome. He then determined to exonerate at least the Eastern Church of the charge, by convening the seventh General Council, at Constantinople, A. D. 754. In this Council, three hundred and fifty-eight Bishops pronounced, that "all bowing down to images was heretical." Yet, thirty years after, the empress Irene, an image worshipper, summoned the Second Council of Nice. This Council pronounced, "That the worship of images is agreeable to Scripture and reason:"—the only matter of doubt being, whether the Godhead and the statue of Christ were entitled to precisely the same homage. (A. D. 787.)

For thirty-eight years the struggle was carried on. Nicephorus allowed liberty of choice to the worshipper; Michael was an image worshipper; Leo the Fifth expelled the images and their

worshippers; his successor Michael was hostile to image worship; Theophilus, his son, was resolute in its destruction. Let the reader of this portion of Eastern history compare those fluctuations with the alternate virtues and idolatries of the kings of Judah. The hand of a woman, the empress Theodora, at length achieved the ruin, by establishing image worship as the law of the Eastern empire, A.D. 842. The decree of the Second Council of Nice was accepted by Pope Adrian as one of the General Councils; and the Greek Church was pronounced to have arrived at the faith of the Roman. Judah was now in the captivity, which had already engulfed Israel. The universal Church was in Babylon, and image worship was the universal chain.

But a Divine promise had been given that Judah should return. While the West remained insensible, a small body of individuals became persecuted in the East for combining the adoption of the Scriptures as their sole guide, with the most resolute refusal to bow down to images. Their chief residence was in the country bordering the Euphrates; as if the real Babylon were to point out the spiritual.

About the middle of the eighth century, the Emperor Constantine, who was hostile to the worship of images, transplanted many of those Christians to Constantinople. From the capital their doctrines passed into Europe.—Those were

the Paulicians, the original reformers, the small returned remnant of Judah. The majority of the empire remained in spiritual captivity, as the majority of Judah had remained in Babylonia. The remnant came forth, by the imperial command, to rebuild the temple of the faith, and restore the walls of their spiritual Jerusalem. Under the various names of Bulgarians, Cathari, Waldenses, and Albigenses, those exiles, thus returned from the captivity, were the first founders of Protestantism.

## CHAPTER XLVIII.

### THE REFORMATION.

THE history of the returned exiles of Judah, is the counterpart of the history of the German Reformation; even to the particularity of individual characters. Of those, but two can be mentioned here—Ezra and Nehemiah. Luther was the representative of Ezra; the Elector of Saxony of Nehemiah.

Ezra was a priest—dwelling in the captivity—distinguished for his knowledge of the Scriptures.—He went forth to instruct his returned brethren in the Law.—He found them much debased by heathen intercourse, and urged them to break off the connexion.—He proceeded to restore the religious polity of the nation, and received the aid of the elders.—At length Nehemiah, a Jew, one of the great officers of the empire, moved by compassion for his people, went forth for the especial purpose of fixing the civil polity of the nation; of raising up her “walls and gates,” and of putting

Jerusalem in a condition to withstand her enemies.—On Nehemiah's assuming the government, Ezra retired, and devoted himself solely to religious exertion.—He then, in Nehemiah's presence, read the Scriptures to the people from the pulpit, followed by others, interpreting them into the popular tongue.—Under the protection of Nehemiah, he continued, though with many obstructions, to teach the Scriptures, until he died, highly honoured by the people.

The features of Luther's history are decisive of his representative character. Luther was of the Romish communion, and an Augustinian monk. He was so far distinguished for his attainments as to be appointed Professor of Divinity in Wittenberg. Though thus beginning in "the captivity," he came forth from it, with the avowed determination of joining the Reformed, and preaching the Gospel; he had now left the spiritual Babylon, and put himself at the head of the returned exiles of Judah. At this period the Reformation was singularly decayed; the reformers had been terrified by the executions of Huss and others; some of them were falling into unscriptural extravagances, some into apathy; the whole required a new and rigorous separation from the natural errors of ignorance and passion.—His preaching was followed by an immediate change. The Reformation flourished with renewed vigour; like Ezra, he entered on his commission, followed

by a new multitude from Babylon ; but he found violent opposition from authority, and was exposed to struggles that threatened to ruin the Reformation. The Papal Bulls were issued against him, and he was in hazard of his life ; but he persevered with still more boldness, and finally sealed his opinions, in a work published in the year 1520, entitled “ The Babylonish Captivity,” and in which he pronounced the Popedom to be the embodying of the predicted corruptions of the Church, “ the Antichrist ” of the New Testament, the “ Man of Sin ” of the old.

But when he was on the point of ruin through this bold attack, a most powerful friend of the Reformation appeared, in the person of the Prince of the country, Frederic the Wise, Elector of Saxony. By the constitution of the German empire, the Elector was not merely a sovereign, but one of the Great Officers of the imperial court. Frederic stood beside the imperial throne, and was even so high in authority and estimation, that, on the death of the Emperor Maximilian, the succession was offered to him by the unanimous votes of the princes<sup>1</sup>. Frederic now assumed the direction

<sup>1</sup> Robertson’s Charles V. vol. ii. p. 56.

The connexion is closer still. The Reformation under Luther had made some progress in reforming *practical* abuses, when the Emperor Maximilian died. In consequence of his death, Frederic was especially appointed, as an Officer of the empire, to the Vicariate of Saxony ; in other words, received

of the Reformed ; and hurrying away Luther from his dangers by a friendly seizure, hid him in one of his castles. Luther, like Ezra, had thus retired from his administration of the Church, on the appearance of the new Nehemiah, the Prince commissioned to protect its existence. Frederic refused to persecute, and his character and personal authority gave the Reformed Church a solid foundation among the German states. He gave it literally a defence, and placed it in a position of power and security, which, though strongly assailed by the whole force of the imperial arms, could never be broken. Luther soon re-appeared ; but it was, armed with a new power, almost a new office. From the commencement of his career, he had laboured to propagate explanations of the Scriptures ; but in his solitude he had first begun a general translation of the Bible. This was the labour which immortalizes his memory. He now came forward, and, under the protection of the Elector, delivered his translation to Germany. The new Ezra, in the presence of the new Nehemiah of a time of religious light and freedom,

a commission to superintend, in his character of imperial delegate, the country which was the asylum of the "returned exiles," the Church of the Reformed. It is to be observed also, that Luther, from this period, chiefly abandoning his attack of the practices, devoted himself to exposing the *doctrines*, of Rome.



interpreted the Law and the Prophets to the people.

This was the *great work* of the Reformation, the point from which the old high road of superstition, of religious slavery, and mental darkness, turned one way, and the upward path of life, light, and religious liberty, the other. The translation of the Scriptures from the forgotten language of Rome into the tongue of the country, was received at once with grateful homage, solemn contrition, and holy triumph. “The people bowed their heads and worshipped.” The people wept as they heard the words of the law; the people shouted with sacred rejoicing; and on that day they held a festival, and exulted that they once more heard the wisdom of their fathers. “And all the people went their way, to eat and to drink, and to send portions, and to make great mirth, *because they understood the words which were declared unto them*<sup>1</sup>.” Luther continued to publish the Scriptures, until he and his assistants had completed, like Ezra, the sacred volume. Germany was now filled with interpreters, men of virtue and zeal, who contributed their scholarship and their lives to the diffusion of the Scriptures; and before he died, he had the unspeakable joy of seeing his spiritual Jerusalem established in a security and dignity which nothing in human power can shake, and which can be

<sup>1</sup> Nehemiah viii. 12.

undone only by the fatal "intermarriages with the nations who are not of Judah," submissions to objects and interests hostile to the spirit of the Reformation.

## CHAPTER XLIX.

### NAPOLEON.

FROM the fall of the Babylonian empire (about B.C. 538.) to the Asiatic conquests of Alexander, Jerusalem was in the hands of the Persian emperors. It is with regret that the writer feels himself limited to a mere outline of the extraordinary, yet exact connection, subsisting at this interesting period between the Jewish and Christian series. Nor must the reader be startled at the novelty of discovering the Persian empire to have taken its place in the providential system, as the prototype of Germany ; Greece of France ; and the founder of the brilliant and brief Macedonian empire, to have filled, to the ancient world, the characteristic place and successes of the founder of the most dazzling and short-lived empire of modern days.

The Persian empire, under Cyrus and his successors, had rendered itself the paramount power of Asia, had rapidly conquered the kingdoms lying between the Euphrates and the Mediterranean, and finally established over them a government of great satraps or viceroys. In about

a century, the provinces on the Mediterranean gradually assumed independence; but, at the time of the Macedonian invasion, those provinces had been once more brought to acknowledge at least a nominal dependence, and all joined in the resistance to Macedon.—In the beginning of the eleventh century, the German emperors possessed almost uncontrolled power, giving their vassals the title of kings, appointing to all dignities of the Church, erecting free cities, and calling the Diet, or grand council of the nation. The princes of the empire all held stations as Officers of the imperial household. From the fifteenth century these privileges were greatly reduced, and the emperors were little more than nominal heads, except of their hereditary dominions. But at the commencement of the French revolutionary war, the spirit of the German league was renewed, and all its princes took up arms in the common cause of the empire.

Among the early exploits of the Persian empire had been the overthrow of the Babylonian, though Babylon was still left as an imperial city, renowned for its magnificence.—The twelfth and thirteenth centuries were the zenith of Papal superiority, yet at that period Germany gave an irrecoverable blow to the temporal power of the Popedom. The emperor Henry IV. in the twelfth century, had begun the quarrel, on the right of investing bishops, the first effects of which were to

drive the reigning Pope, Gregory VII., from Rome into exile, where this ambitious Pontiff *died*. From the close of the thirteenth century the Papal sovereignty over Europe sank with surprising rapidity, and was almost totally destroyed by the schism of Avignon. It gradually recovered a portion of its influence, but its uncontrolled dominion, the *empire* of Innocent and Boniface, was at an end for ever.

Alexander was the instrument by which the Macedonian empire was to punish the Persian, as the Persian had punished the Babylonian. Napoleon was the instrument by which the French empire was to break down the German, as the German had broken down the sovereignty of the spiritual Babylon. The original position and progress of both are almost identical.—Alexander was born in an obscure corner of Europe, which had hitherto been nearly barbarous, had been unknown as Greece, and was actually admitted to bear the name but a short time before<sup>1</sup>. Greece, at the period of Alexander's birth, was a loose system of discordant republics. It had just come out of a violent convulsion, the "Sacred War," occasioned by the plunder of the Temple of Delphi. Athens became especially the victim of factious

<sup>1</sup> Alexander, the seventh king of Macedon, was not suffered even to contend at the Olympic games, until he had furnished proof that his ancestors were Argive.

orators and generals, and was, like all Greece, extravagantly eager for war at that moment<sup>1</sup>.

We now revert to the Representative furnished by our own age to the mighty Macedonian. A mere juxta-position is all that can be given here. But the facts are familiar to the world, and the evidence is of the clearest nature. It absolutely cuts off every subterfuge of scepticism.

Alexander was born at Pella<sup>2</sup> in Macedon<sup>2</sup>; the native of a small and sterile territory, looked on by the Greeks as a half savage spot, and which was fully brought within the Greek community but in the previous generation. The education of Alexander was not Macedonian, but eminently Greek, under Aristotle.—Napoleon was born in Corsica<sup>3</sup>. This island was the Macedon of the south, a little wild spot, chiefly remarkable for its family feuds, and scarcely regarded as European, until its conquest by France, a few years before

<sup>1</sup> "The orators" says Mitford, vol. vii. "found their principal source of gain in war. No officer could hold foreign command without an orator, ready on all occasions to undertake his defence. To increase the foreign dependencies of Athens, to have disturbances arise in those dependencies, to have complaints to the courts of Athens, whether from foreign republics against each other, or against Athenian officers, all tended to the advantage of the orators." Are we here reading the history of France or Greece, or are we not rather reading the history of all democracy, the pretence and the profligacy alike in all?

<sup>2</sup> B. C. 356.

<sup>3</sup> 15th of August, 1769.

his birth. He was educated at the royal military school of Brienne, in France.

The Sacred War, commencing in the plunder of the great national temple of Delphi<sup>1</sup>, by the Phocians, its guardians, who expended the plunder in levying troops, had thrown all Greece into convulsion. Greece became a system of confederated republics, with Philip holding the chief governorship. Philip was soon assassinated, to the great exultation of the republicans. The tumults of Greece again broke out immediately ; the confederation instituted under Philip was at an end ; the orators became the governors and disturbers of Greece. Speedily came bloody retribution. A war of two years, in which Alexander first repelled the foreign enemies of his father, and then brought the Greeks to submission, exterminating the Thebans, (the original cause of the plunder of Delphi,) made him, at twenty-two, captain general of Greece for the invasion of Persia.—The plunder of the Church establishment of France was the first act of the revolution, as it was probably among its chief incentives. From this ensued a general convulsion of society. The “orators” became the virtual government. But the general state still formed the semblance of a

<sup>1</sup> Diodorus says that the plunder of the shrine amounted to the enormous sum of 10,000 talents (about two millions and a quarter sterling). It was speedily dissipated in war. (Diod. xvi. 76.)

monarchy, a federation of republics under a royal head. The king of this federation was suddenly put to death<sup>1</sup>. A burst of almost universal war instantly followed ; war with England in the same year ; insurrection at Lyons and Toulon ; and the reign of terror. In the *same year* Napoleon first became known, by the siege of Toulon. Having repelled the foreign enemy, he was called to service in the interior, and was made commandant of the army of the government<sup>2</sup>. An attack upon the German emperor, through Italy, was next determined on ; the government gave this great enterprize into his hands, and by the battle of Monte Notte, he commenced a career of victory, which from that moment made him the first general of France. No man had ever commenced life with the public hope more powerfully concentrated upon him. “Advance that man,” said Barras to the government, “or he will advance himself without you.” Napoleon had the same vivid and justified confidence. On his appointment, “In three months,” said he, “I shall be either at Milan or Paris.” One of the ministers objected to his youth. “In a year,” loftily pronounced Napoleon, “I shall be either an old general, or dead.” It was about two years and a half from the siege of Toulon to the battle of Monte Notte<sup>3</sup>. His age was six and twenty.

<sup>1</sup> Jan. 21, 1793.

<sup>2</sup> 4th of October, 1795.

<sup>3</sup> April 10, 1796.



Alexander, with a force of 34,500 men, invaded Asia Minor, overran it in two campaigns, and compelled the Persian king to treat of peace. The treaty was rejected, but the war in Asia ceased, and the thoughts of Alexander were turned to a totally different quarter. He now projected the mastery of the Mediterranean, and for that purpose determined on the conquest of Tyre and Egypt. To conquer Tyre without a fleet was hopeless. He applied himself to collect a fleet of 220 sail, assaulted Tyre, and took it by storm. Egypt fell into his hands immediately after, almost without a blow.—From the time when Napoleon fought his first battle, in *two* campaigns he overran Italy, and forced the German emperor to send Cobenzel to *treat of peace*. In the interview, Napoleon conspicuously exhibited the high conceptions which he had formed of his destiny. The German ambassador had set down, as the first article, the recognition of the French republic. “Efface that,” said Napoleon proudly, “it is as clear as the sun in heaven.” At the Te Deum on the celebration of peace, the Austrian would have taken precedence. Napoleon forced him back. “Had your emperor himself been here,” was his expression, “I should not have forgotten that in my person the dignity of France is represented<sup>1</sup>.” He seems to be echoing the

<sup>1</sup> Treaty of Campo Formio, 3d of October, 1797.

fiery words of Alexander to the Persian monarch. "Henceforth, if you have any communication to make, address me as the King of Asia. Pretend not to treat with me on equal terms ; but petition me as the master of your fate. If you propose to dispute the sovereignty with me, stand your ground ; I shall march and attack you wherever you are." The same spirit spoke in both, and in both was oracular. To retrieve the loss of the French colonies, and find a substitute for them in the Mediterranean, Napoleon next collected the fleet of France, and sailed for Alexandria, the city which had since the days of its founder been the substitute for Tyre. He entered Alexandria by storm, slaughtering its troops and people with unnecessary, and even ostentatious, cruelty. Egypt surrendered to him almost without another blow.

On Alexander's landing in Egypt, an extraordinary circumstance occurred. The Greek was the worshipper of a mythology totally different from that of Egypt. He had his idols, beautiful and noble works of art, imaginary as they were, yet always the representatives of beings above man, half-celestial nymphs, or resemblances of heroes transferred to immortality, or of gods, all, in some degree, dependent on a supreme Jove : but no Greek stooped to the worship of a creature of the inferior races, a brute beast, insect, or plant of the ground. To the astonishment of history, and we may fully believe, to

the astonishment, if not to the scorn, of the time, one of Alexander's earliest declarations was, his homage to the lowest shape of religious debasement, the worship of the bull Apis. "*He himself,*" as the historian states, "assisted in the ceremony; and, not to leave the effect negative, he sent to Greece for the persons most eminent as public performers in all the amusements of the theatre<sup>1</sup>." All was open acknowledgment and formal adoption; the brute worship was solemnly recognised in its native ceremonial and festivities.—Napoleon's first act, on taking possession of Egypt, was to publish, in a proclamation to his troops: "The people with whom we are about to live are Mahometans. The first article of their faith is, There is no God but God, and Mahomet is his prophet. Do not contradict them: deal with them as you have done with the *Jews and Italians.*" After thus equalizing the religion of the Israelite and Roman Catholic with the Mahometan in general contempt; he spoke more distinctly to the Moslem. "I come to restore your rights, to punish the usurpers; and I respect, more than the Mamelukes ever did, God, his Prophet, and the Koran. Sheiks and Imauns, assure the people, that *we also are true Mussulmans.* Is it not we that have *ruined the Pope?*" The historian

<sup>1</sup> Mitford, vol. vii.

of Alexander accounts for his adoption of the degrading and abominable worship of Egypt by the "use of superstition, for honourable and salutary purposes<sup>1</sup>;" as if any purposes so attained could be but base and pernicious: and for the ease of his adoption, by his being a philosopher, after the manner "more especially of Aristotle;" who looked upon a Deity as merely the mainspring of the physical machine. Napoleon was a *philosophe* and fatalist; of course a believer in the mainspring, and nothing more. This declaration of Mahometanism in Egypt was policy, wretched and short-lived as such policy must be. But, in Europe it gave the first blow to any hope of good that might have fixed itself on his fortunes; and marked him, sooner or later, for condign ruin.

In Egypt, Alexander is commemorated as having, for the first time, exhibited his talents as an *administrator*<sup>2</sup>. He applied himself to the improvement of the face of the country, gave it laws, established its revenues, and laid the foun-

<sup>1</sup> Mitford, vol. vii.

<sup>2</sup> Mitford observes, "Hitherto we have seen Alexander displaying the most ardent courage, consummate prudence, &c. In Egypt we *first* find a noble feature of his character displayed. He would *know* the country which he had so acquired, and establish suitable regulations," &c. Vol. vii. He established native governors, but Macedonian garrisons. Napoleon, "*administrateur*," established two councils of Mollahs and proprietors.

dation of the famous city that still bears his name, resembling Tyre in its being nearly insular, in its being built on the edge of the Mediterranean, and being the emporium of all the opulent commerce of the South, and the great city of the arts in its day ; once a city of 600,000 people.

A circumstance of a very peculiar nature next marked both expeditions. If the principle of a *designed* coincidence be true, we have no right to consider any minuteness of circumstance as below the principle ; for it is by such minutenesses that the likeness is most strongly identified.

A fantasy, not unsuited to his exciteable imagination, had urged Alexander to visit the temple of Jupiter Ammon, and consult the oracle. The Oasis in which it lay, was the residence of a body of the learned of Egypt ; and the temple was the most famous in the land for immemorial sanctity. He marched with a portion of his army to the South ; the march was attended with extreme difficulties ; water failed : they lost their way in the sands ; but, in the last state of distress, they reached the temple, at the end of eleven days. There they were abundantly refreshed. Alexander received the answer of the Oracle, which, according to the Greek traditions, pronounced that he was a true descendant of Jupiter ; and all returned in triumph, and with a new and strong popular impression of the destined supremacy of their chieftain.—Napoleon, a month after his landing, marched to

discover the retreat of the Mamelukes. For fourteen days he moved along the bank of the Nile, at the head of a large detachment of his army. "The miseries of this progress were extreme. The air was crowded with pestiferous insects; water was scarce and bad; the country had been swept clear of man, beast, and vegetable. Under this torture, the gallant spirits of such men as Murat and Lannes could not sustain themselves. They trod their cockades in the sand. The common soldiers asked, with angry murmurs, if it was here their general intended to give them their seven acres?" (the land promised to the settlers<sup>1</sup>.) In this distress they toiled on from the 7th of July to the 21st. At last they saw the squadrons; but towering above them, they saw one of the most exciting and solemn sights of the world—the range of the pyramids, hoary with the recollections of centuries. And this was the impression that instantly stamped itself upon the glowing mind of Napoleon. The Mamelukes were forgotten, as the dust at the feet of those stupendous monuments of nations dead and gone. Alexander had been inflamed to visit the temples of Ammon, by the tradition that they had been visited by his ancestors, Perseus, in his expedition against Medusa, and Hercules, after the victory over Busiris. With Napoleon, the first feeling was also that

<sup>1</sup> Lockhart's spirited Life of Napoleon.

of romantic antiquity. “Soldiers!” he exclaimed, “from the summit of yonder pyramids forty ages behold you.” He then ordered the trumpets to sound, and advanced to the charge.

To Alexander, the result of his singular expedition had been, undoubtedly, an accession of moral force. He brought back with him from the temple some degree of that veneration which is always connected with hazards undergone from religious impulses. The pilgrim, the crusader, and the Hadgi, have successively had their share in this natural tribute.—Napoleon’s march, probably, in the first instance, arose from a determination to show to Egypt, that no desert could screen his enemies; but, with his Savans round him, and all France, romantic and imaginative, gazing on his steps, he clearly had a desire to fight within view of “the Pyramids!” Those too, like the shrines of Ammon, were temples; and they had been in the centre of a priestly region. Many a strange rite had been done, and many a fearful oracle uttered within their chambers. The secrets of all the natural knowledge, the high historic memories, and the mystic theology, of the old land of wisdom, may be there still, hidden in some of those profound treasures of rock, which neither time, avarice, conquest, nor curiosity, has been able to penetrate. They too stood in the midst of a desert, which it required a painful effort to traverse. But what was done is

equally peculiar with what was seen. Alexander leaving his troops without the shrine, entered, worshipped, and received the response of the Oracle; doubtless the voice of some priest of the temple.—“Napoleon visited the interior of the great pyramid; and in the secret chamber, in which three thousand years before, some Pharaoh had been interred, repeated once more his confession of faith: ‘There is no God but God, and Mahomet is his prophet.’ The infidel was probably at that moment standing within the very shrine of Apis<sup>1</sup>.” We have had the invocation; we have also the response. “The bearded Orientals who accompanied him, responded solemnly, ‘God is merciful. Thou hast spoken like the most learned of the prophets<sup>2</sup>.’ ”

Even the slight circumstance, that the Greeks were hospitably and abundantly entertained in the Oasis, had its counterpart, in the fruits of the

<sup>1</sup> In the Ammonian Oasis there were two temples, one much smaller than the other which contained the chief shrine of the god, with chambers for the priests. Whether the Pyramids were tombs or temples, has been disputed; in some later instances they may have been both; or a heathen king might desire to sleep in the safeguard of the shrine. But the discovery of the bones of an ox in the sarcophagus, which had been supposed to contain the remains of a monarch; with the form of the structure, its astronomical position, and the multitude of its untenanted chambers, are strongly in favour of their being temples. .

<sup>2</sup> Lockhart.



French victory. The plunder of the Mamelukes made the troops opulent. "It being the custom of those warriors to carry their wealth about them, a single corpse often made a soldier's fortune. In the deserted dwellings of the chiefs, at Cairo, and in the neighbouring villages, they found proofs that Eastern luxury is no empty name."

As if to complete this train of coincidence, it is certain that Napoleon returned with an actual and extraordinary accession of popular awe. The conqueror of the Mamelukes was thenceforth deemed invincible. He was named, with fine Orientalism, Sultan Kebjr, "the King of Fire." "His name spread panic through the East," and he was considered to be the destined scourge of God<sup>1</sup>.

Alexander was preparing to visit the antiquities of Upper Egypt, when he was suddenly summoned to return to Tyre, by intelligence from the former seat of war, that the Persian king was collecting all his forces. On his return to Tyre, "he received numerous communications from Greece, announcing that the Lacedæmonians (the rigid republican party of Greece), were attempting to dissolve the confederacy, and had taken up arms to form a new confederacy under their ancient leaders of Sparta<sup>2</sup>. Darius having

<sup>1</sup> Lockhart.

<sup>2</sup> Mitford, vol. viii.

supplied them with money, which they employed in bribing the chief magistrates of the republics. "Had Athens acceded, nearly all Greece would have disclaimed the Macedonian supremacy<sup>1</sup>." Alexander instantly sent money to keep up his interest with his friends in Greece, and a fleet to overawe his enemies. Having restrained the attempts to dismiss him from command, he *suddenly left Egypt*, and prepared to invade the Persian dominions again. His route was now more direct upon the Babylonish provinces. "The army quitted the shores of the Mediterranean;" and at the age of twenty-five, Alexander began his fourth campaign.—While Napoleon was fighting in Syria, he received from France the news, at once of reverses in Italy, and of the difficulties of the government. He instantly returned to Alexandria; thence he secretly and suddenly returned to France. He there crushed the republican party, remodelled the state, made himself first consul<sup>2</sup>, and then, at the age of thirty, commenced his fourth campaign against the German emperor. Like Alexander, with two roads before him; like him, he chose the more difficult. Alexander's reasons were, that it was the better furnished with necessaries, and the shorter. Napoleon was expected to march by the road to Genoa; he struck across the Alps

<sup>1</sup> Mitford, vol. viii.

<sup>2</sup> Nov. 1799.

when they were covered with snow, and poured down into the heart of Italy.

Asia Minor, the finest portion of the Asiatic continent, once the seat of all the genius, luxury, and arts of the world, corresponds to Italy. Its position with reference to the native Persian provinces is closely that of Italy to the German. There is even some general similitude in their shape. A branch of Mount Taurus, the loftiest of the Asiatic chain, marked the eastern division of this rich peninsula, as the Tyrolese Alps form the northern barrier of Italy on the side of Austria.

Alexander was now to fight the battle which decided his claims to empire. The largest force that Persia had ever brought into the field against him, was drawn up in the great plain, on the edge of which stood the city of Arbela. This was the most dubious battle in which he was ever engaged. Where he himself charged, he forced his way; but his left wing was long surrounded, and in such imminent danger, that Parmenio sent to him for succours, telling him that without them he must be ruined. The centre of the Greek line was divided, and the Persian and Parthian cavalry rode through, and plundered the baggage. Towards the close of the engagement, Alexander himself was in the most perilous situation, in the midst of the enemy's horse. But a charge of his Thessalian cavalry at length decided the day. The Persians, who had been injudiciously

drawn up with the river Lycus in their rear, were either driven into the river, or made prisoners. The army was totally broken. Their general had left them early in the day, and fled. Alexander pursued Darius, but in vain. He then returned to take undisturbed possession of the country. His next act was administrative.

Babylon was now in his hands. It had long been severely treated by the Persian kings. They had taken away the golden statue of Belus, and partially destroyed the great temple. For more than a hundred years before, it had all the signs of a declining and falling city. The first care of Alexander was to restore the shrines, and even to rebuild the temple of Belus. The revenues attached to its establishment were restored to the priests. He then offered a sacrifice to Jupiter Belus.

Preparatory to his next expedition against Persia Proper, he marched against the Uxians, a mountain people of remarkable bravery, who had long insisted on making the Persian emperors pay for the passage of their troops. Their country covered a portion of the Persian frontier. Alexander surprised their troops, took possession of their passes, and made them tributary. He then marched on Persia Proper, fought a brief battle on the frontier, passed round the enemy, and took possession of Persepolis, the capital, where he assumed the majesty of an emperor. "He entered the presence chamber, and

seated himself on the throne of the king of kings." The colossal statue of Xerxes had been thrown down at the entrance of the palace; Alexander, on passing it; stopped, and addressed it as if it had been alive—"Shall we leave you in this condition, on account of the war you made upon Greece, or raise you again for the sake of your magnanimity and other virtues?" He stood a long time, as if deliberating what he should do; he then passed on, leaving it as it was<sup>1</sup>.

This portion of the parallel is equally strong with all that went before.—Napoleon advanced until he found the Austrian army drawn up on the great plain of Marengo. The Austrians marched from Alessandria: the battle was desperate. The first French line, under Victor, was beaten, and driven back upon the second; both were then pushed behind Marengo. The Austrian cavalry charged the retreating columns of Lannes, which gave way. The retreat was now general, and Melas, thinking that the day was won, left the field. A reinforcement under Desaix brought the struggle to an equality again. Napoleon was undismayed throughout. At last a charge of his cavalry under Kellerman decided the battle. The routed army rushed towards the Bormida; a great number were drowned; the chief part of the sur-

<sup>1</sup> Williams's Life of Alexander. The ingenious and learned author of this work has long since promised us the life of Cæsar. Why does he delay?

vivore were made prisoners. This battle gave Italy at once into Napoleon's hands<sup>1</sup>. But it was more than a battle, and more than a victory ; it was the final decision of European supremacy, and of his own claims to the highest rank of fame and power. All his future successes were but the natural results of this prodigious struggle. He felt this consciousness himself, for with the predictive spirit of a mind always loftily busy with the future, he pronounced to his staff, as he saw the enemy's squadrons vanishing before him, "After this day, history cannot be written without mentioning our names." This battle was not less the blow that decided the fate of the Continent. Pitt, on reading the bulletin of Marengo ; pointing to a map of Europe on the table, said with melancholy, but powerful, foresight, "Fold up that map, it will not be wanted for these *twenty years*²."

On his return to Paris, and his appointment of First Consul for life, his first attention was turned to the Romish Church. Babylon was at his disposal. "The sparing of the Papal dominions after Marengo, and the re-opening of the French churches, were the preliminaries of the Concordat signed September 18, between the Pope and the revolutionary government. Napoleon avowed himself to be 'no believer in religion,' but conceived it

<sup>1</sup> Marengo, June 14, 1800.

<sup>2</sup> Lockhart.

to be a principle which cannot be eradicated from the heart of man." By the Concordat, the Roman Catholic religion was recognized as the national faith. "The bishoprics were to be filled by the Pope on nominations by the government; the livings were to be re-arranged, and provision made for the clergy by the government." The Pope was discontented, but acquiesced. France which had been atheist so long, was restored to some acknowledgment of religion, and the altars of the old worship, and a portion of its rank and wealth, were restored. Napoleon now prepared for a new German war, to be directed against the Austrian states. His first step was the invasion of Switzerland: he marched 40,000 troops into the country, reduced those hitherto unconquered European Uxii, the frontier guardians of Germany, to rapid submission, and declared himself "Grand Mediator of the Helvetic republic." On the 18th of May, 1804, he pronounced himself emperor. On the 13th of November, 1805, he entered Vienna, and took up his residence in the imperial palace of Schoenbrun. Finishing the war by the battle of Austerlitz, he closed this series of astonishing triumphs by setting the seal to the downfall of the German empire. The statue of the old imperial dynasty had been thrown down at its own gates, the Xerxes had been rudely rent from its pedestal, and Napoleon, for a time, deliberated on the fate of a line at once so powerful,

and so generally guiltless of the vices and violences of power. But the German empire was not to be again raised on its pedestal. He passed on. In 1806 he gave full effect to his decision, by forming the Confederation of the Rhine, which finally withdrew the princes from the imperial allegiance, and abolished the ancient German constitution.

The connection still proceeds, to the close of both the lives, but we must now leave it to be pursued by others. Alexander, driving the Persians to bay, is involved in a conflict with the *Scythians*. It is brief; he defeats them, and the Scythian monarch proposes peace. An effort of Spitamenes, one of the great satraps of Persia, to restore the empire, involves him in a second Scythian attack, which is rapidly defeated, but which leads him into Bactria, and begins hostilities of great waste and hazard. As it was the least glorious, so it was also the most toilsome of all his Asiatic campaigns. *The whole land* was in arms. The Bactrians held a middle place between the civilization of the Persians and the native Scythians. He fixed his camp in Bactria, and there commenced the unaccountable and profitless campaigns for the conquest of the north of Asia. Passing by the southern shore of the Caspian, he plunged into the Tartar desert, pursuing an enemy whom he could never overtake, and at great personal risk capturing towns, which he was forced immediately to abandon. He at last arrived at



the Hyphasis ; where he was finally compelled to retrace his steps, not by any military disaster, but by the utter weariness and exhaustion of the army. Revolts too were breaking out in the conquered provinces, with new disturbances in Greece, where from his long absence, his authority had diminished, and he was even supposed to be dead. From the march into Sogdiana, (B.C. 327.) to the halt on the Hyphasis, (B.C. 326.) was not quite two years. But, to one feature of this campaign it is impossible to avoid alluding ; his movement homeward. Descending the Indus for a short distance, he determined to make the remainder of his march overland. This description shall be given, for the sake of accuracy, in extracts from the authorities already adopted<sup>1</sup>. It was his “ March from Moscow.”

“The king now ventured into the Desert of Gedrosia ; the modern Macron. During sixty days spent in traversing this waste, from the edge of Oreitia to Pura, they had to struggle against difficulties greater than were ever before or after surmounted by a regular army. \* \* \* Arrian thus delivers the narrative :—The commencement of the march in the desert was over a region covered with myrrh-bearing shrubs. The trampling of the long columns crushed the fragrant stems, and diffused a grateful odour through the atmosphere. But the Macedonians soon found that the balmy

<sup>1</sup> Williams's Life of Alexander.

gales were no compensation for the want of food and water. \* \* \* All the companions of Alexander, who had followed him from Macedonia to the Hyphasis, agreed that all the other labours and dangers in their Asiatic expedition, were not to be compared with the march through Gedrosia. The burning heat and scarcity of water proved fatal to a *great portion* of the men, and to *all the beasts of burden*, for the desert was like an ocean of moving sand, and assumed all the fantastic shapes of driven snow. The men *sank deep into those banks or wreaths*, and the progress of all the *wheeled vehicles was soon stopped*. The length of some of their marches exhausted them to the last degree, for they were regulated, not by the strength of the men, but by the discovery of water. \* \* \* The destruction of the beasts of burden was principally the work of the men, who, in their hunger, killed and devoured not only the oxen, but horses and mules. For this purpose they would linger behind, and on coming up, allege that the animals had died of thirst or fatigue. In the general relaxation of discipline, few officers were curious in remarking what was done amiss. *Even Alexander could only preserve the forms of authority*, by an apparent ignorance of disorders which could not be remedied, and by conniving at offences which severity could not have checked."

"But the destruction of the beasts of burden was the *death warrant of the sick and exhausted*,

who were left behind, without conductors and without consolers. For, *eagerness to advance* became the general characteristic, and the miseries of others were overlooked by men who anticipated their own doom. \* \* \* Amid such appalling recollections, the strong man could not deeply sympathize with his feebler comrade, but husbanded his own strength for the eventual struggle. As most of the marches were *made by night*, many were overpowered by sleep, and sank on the road side. Few of those ever rejoined the army, they rose and attempted to pursue the track, but a consciousness of their desolation, and the want of food, for famine in all its horrors was in the rear of such an army, soon paralyzed all exertion, and after floundering for a short period among the hillocks of yielding sand, they would lay themselves down and die."

They were now to suffer an addition to the miseries of this dreadful retreat, *from a river*, the last enemy which they might expect in a wilderness of sand. "Another and most dissimilar misfortune overtook them. They had encamped one evening in the dry bed of a torrent. Late at night, in consequence of a sudden fall of rain among the mountains, the waters descended, with the fury and depth of an impetuous river, and swept every thing before them. Many helpless women and children perished in the flood, which also carried away *the royal equipage, and most of*

*the remaining beasts of burden.* \* \* \* At one period, the guides confessed that they knew not where they were. A gale of wind had swept the surface of the desert, and obliterated every trace in the sands. The army therefore was in the greatest danger of perishing in the pathless wild.

“Alexander, thus thrown upon his own resources, took with him a few horsemen, and turning to the left, hastened, by what he deemed the shortest cut, to the sea shore. His escort dropped off by degrees, and five alone remained when he was fortunate enough to reach the coast.” There they found water by digging wells. The army followed, marched for seven days along the shore, their guides recovered the road, and turning inland, they at length reached Pura (the modern Buncore), where they halted. Such is Arrian’s account. Strabo says, “Many sank down by the road side, exhausted by fatigue, heat, and thirst. They were seized with tremors, accompanied by convulsive motions of the hands and feet, and died like men overpowered by rigors and shivering fits.” The satrap of Gedrosia had neglected his duty; on him therefore fell all the blame of the soldiers’ sufferings. He was dismissed. Intelligence next arrived, that Philip, the governor of the provinces west of the Indus, had been slain in a mutiny of the Greek mercenaries, but that the mutiny had been put down, and the assassins slain.

It must be unnecessary to follow this sketch minutely through the northern campaigns of Napoleon ; the *two* Russian wars arising out of the efforts of Russia to relieve Germany ; the Polish war, and the memorable invasion directed to the heart of the Russian territories. Even in the deepening shades of national character the similitude is observable between the Persian, the Bactrian, and the Scythian ; and the Austrian, the Pole, and the Russ. The march to Moscow, baffled, not by the enemy, but by a new antagonist, the conflagration, which rendered it equally impossible to advance or to remain ; the *sixty* days' retreat<sup>1</sup>, the agonies of hunger and toil, the loss of all the baggage, artillery, and horses ; the night marches, the deaths by the road side, the furious disorders, the final havoc of life and wealth in the Beresina, the formation of a body of cavalry for the especial escort of Napoleon, his sudden departure from the army, their arrival at Wilna, the general wrath against the officers who had neglected to make provision for them in their march and on their arrival ; the intelligence that awaited them of Mallet's conspiracy, which by the help of the disaffected in high stations was so near unseating the government ; the sudden suppression of this daring attempt, and the immediate

<sup>1</sup> Begun from the Kremlin, 19th October. Napoleon arrived at Paris 18th December. The troops reached the Prussian frontier at Kowno about the same time.

death of the conspirators, are all lines of the same picture.

But the coincidences are not limited to those events, which may be called the regular course of the lives ; the history is full of minor traits, if not in exact order, yet full of identity.

In the course of the campaign in which Alexander became master of Egypt, he advanced towards Jerusalem, was received by the high priest as a promised deliverer, and in return pledged his protection.—We find Napoleon scarcely seated on the throne, when (in 1806), he astonished Europe and mankind by summoning a Sanhedrin at Paris, receiving their allegiance as that of their nation, and placing them in the rank of citizens of France.

Alexander had originally married Roxana, the daughter of a Bactrian chief. She appears not to have borne him children. *After* the conquest of the Persian empire, he married Statira, the young *daughter of the emperor*, with the expectation of having an heir, and also of confirming, “in the eyes of his Persian subjects, his title to the throne<sup>1</sup>.” But this transaction, which was entirely opposed to the laws, and even the customs, of Greece, however it might have been violated by the license of power ; and which produced dreadful hostility on the part of Roxana ; was made more memorable still, by his command

<sup>1</sup> Williams.

that his principal officers should also marry. To three of his generals he gave three princesses of the imperial house, now his own. Eighty of his favourite officers were also married. He gave portions to all the brides; and he ordered that all the soldiers who had married Persian wives, and who amounted to 10,000, should also receive gratuities.—Napoleon's marriages with Josephine, and Maria Louise, the daughter of the Emperor of Germany, when *fallen* from his title, and reduced to the rank of Emperor of Austria, are sufficiently remembered. The marriages of his sisters and relatives with his generals, and even the marriages of the soldiers of the consular guard; the whole scene of royal revelry, munificence, and alliances, which astonished the world so universally in the days of the French emperor of Europe, were but the revival of a scene, shown two thousand years ago by the Grecian Emperor of Asia.

The closing of their career was different; for Alexander's return from the fiery sands left him still the lord of the world. Napoleon survived the return from his snows, only to exhibit a tremendous lesson to the ambition that at once tramples on man and insults Heaven. But they died alike: the two greatest warriors of the world died, not by the chances of war, but by disease. A still more singular trait allied the last hours of those two men of wonder. Alexander, the disciple of

Aristotle, the worshipper of every shrine, and the despiser of all, closed his career in the most solemn forms of reverence for his native worship. During seven days of the tertian, which wore away the master mind and frame, he offered sacrifices to the gods of Greece, and was even carried on a couch to the altar.—Napoleon, the notorious infidel, to whom the worship of Jew, Christian, or Moslem, was equally a matter of scorn, desired to die in the rites of his original Church. “I am neither *physicien* nor *philosophe*,” were his words. “I believe in God, and am of the religion of my father : I was born a Catholic, and will fulfil all the duties of that Church, and receive the assistance which she administers.” He received the sacraments, and in two days after he died.

Both Alexander and Napoleon left sons ; neither was succeeded by his son. The Macedonian empire fell into the possession of four princes. Yet notwithstanding this dissolution of the overthrower of the Persian empire, that empire was not restored.—The empire of Napoleon fell into the hands of the four confederate powers ; England, Austria, Russia, and Prussia. Yet the Emperor of Austria remained limited to his hereditary dominions. His sceptre was never waved again over the German empire.

The periods of both Alexander and Napoleon were also connected with one great religious event



—the diffusion of the Scriptures. The Septuagint version followed, and *arose out of*, the circumstances of the reign of Alexander.—The formation of the Bible societies of Europe commenced in 1805. The former in rather more than half a century from the end of the Macedonian empire ; the latter in one year from the beginning of the French. The difference, slight as it is, may have arisen, in the former instance, from a providential design of deferring the work until the Greek language had full opportunity to pervade the East, and until the impediment naturally existing to the diffusion of the Scriptures, in a period of universal war, had been removed by the partial return to tranquillity. The same objection not subsisting in the latter period with respect to language ; Europe was no sooner relieved from the excessive terrors of democratic revolt in the bosom of every state, by the formation of an imperial government in France, the death-blow to democracy ; than the Bible was instantly sent forth, to bear its light through all nations.

## CHAPTER L.

### THE FUTURE.

THAT since the beginning of the Christian era, a succession of remarkable changes have continued to operate on society; and that those changes are of so distinct a character, as to present themselves to the eye in regular periods; is a plain fact of history. The first four centuries were ages of *religion*; times occupied in the advance of Christianity, and consummated by the fall of Heathenism, in the reign of Theodosius. Nearly four centuries more were ages of *blood*; times of barbarian invasion, and general war, consummated in the establishment of the Popedom as a spiritual and temporal monarchy. Nearly five centuries more were ages of *darkness*; times of privation of religious, and of all, knowledge, consummated by the establishment of the Popedom at the head of universal monarchy, the fall of the Waldenses, and the submission of all the European kingdoms. Nearly five centuries more combined the character of ages of com-

parative light, and yet ages of religious persecution : a period of violent struggles for and against Protestantism ; of great severities exercised by the Inquisition ; and of massacres and banishments inflicted on the Protestants throughout Europe : the whole consummated by the outbreak of a spirit of infidelity and rebellion in France, yet which, by abolishing the Inquisition in all lands, destroyed the last public instrument of religious persecution.

But it is also a plain Scriptural fact, that those changes were distinctly contemplated by Providence. In the prophecy given to St. John, before the close of the *first* century, under emblems which form the common prophetic language, were detailed to him the exact succession, as well as the peculiar nature, of those changes.

After a most solemn summons to his attention, as about to see a great unfolding of the future, he is shown, first,—the emblem of a monarchy going forth to complete the triumph of religion.—He is next shown the armed emblem of an age of slaughter ; the rider on a horse coloured with *fire and gore*.—Next follows the rider on a horse of *darkness*, holding the balance by which he makes himself the judge of truth and conscience, and proclaiming an universal famine of “ the bread of life.”—Then follows the ghastly rider, on a horse of a lighter hue ; the emblem of an age of comparative knowledge, but bringing with him

the power of the grave, persecution, death, and Hades. The consummation of this period we have but just passed.—Then follows the period on which we are entering; evidently a period in which the coldness and growing infidelity of the religious world will call down chastisement in the form of desolation; a period in which multitudes will fall away, and many will be slain for their adherence to religion.—This shall be followed by a period of fearful retaliation on the powers of the earth, which have perpetrated those violences; when the whole fabric of empire shall be shaken. Connected with this period, or in close succession, shall be the recall of a large portion of the Jewish nation to the religion of the promise, the acknowledgment of Christianity.—The prediction then declares the second coming of the Lord of Christianity; the establishment of an era of religious peace and happiness on earth, as large as man is capable of enjoying, until his transfer to a higher state of being. Such is the prophecy of the 6th and 7th chapters of the Revelation.

If the theory of the three Cycles be true, the future events of the third will be, as in the two former,—a falling away of the majority of the visible Church into religious negligence or direct infidelity, followed by a great and visible chastisement of the Church, as in the days of Epiphanes; with partial changes, until religion shall seem to be extinguished, as at the fall of Jerusalem and

the destruction of the Jewish nation. This again shall be followed by the general ruin of the devastators; the mighty calling to the mountains to fall upon them, and shield them from the day of Divine wrath: and this display of the Divine anger followed by the still more abundant display of the Divine mercy; the earth becoming a great religious empire, under either the visible or virtual domination of Christianity.

So far, the deductions from the two former Cycles for the history of the third, are confirmed by the prophecy of the seven seals. But the Cycle should go further, and contain the two extraordinary events, of a revolt against the Divine sceptre, and of the rapid extinction of that revolt by some memorable act of Deity; the whole closing in the commencement of a new and more illustrious course of Providence. We find those events fully established by the direct declarations of Scripture, that,—after the power of evil shall have been divinely coerced, for a time, Satan shall again be let loose from his chain, and shall go forth and “deceive the nations which are in the four quarters of the earth;” while, in this new and vast temptation, there shall be no departure from the common principle of the Divine government, the permission of trial for the purpose of compelling man’s own observation to mark the line between the pretender to virtue and the possessor of virtue. The true worshipper shall be sustained, in the utter

abscission of the hypocrite.—Then, at the close of this final purification, shall come the great termination of the providential government. The whole multitude of the heathen dead, from the creation to the last day; and of all those who, though professing the faiths of Judæism and Christianity, have not “been thought worthy” of that “first resurrection,” in which Paul and the leaders of the apostolic age so fervently prayed to be numbered; shall be summoned to receive the judgment due to their *works*, before the King and Arbiter of all; a judgment, of whose forms we can conjecture nothing, but of whose principle we have six thousand years of proof, that it will be in the perfection of justice, wisdom, and mercy. To that judgment, the antediluvian millions, who now sleep in the depths of the ocean, shall be summoned: “the *sea* shall give up her dead.” To that judgment, the graves of the land shall surrender: “Death and Hades shall deliver up the dead that are in them.” To that judgment, the multitude of those who have died in holiness, and been borne from the death-bed into Paradise, shall descend, surrounding the King of saints; but not to be judged. They have been purified already by their acceptance of the atonement; they are already the children of the Father; uniting holiness and power, kings and priests to God for ever. Then, the system of the Divine sovereignty having been cleared before the

great assemblage of intellectual existence ; the Atonement having fulfilled its whole purpose ; the attributes of the Deity having fully vindicated their origin ; the last words shall be spoken that these heavens and earth shall ever hear. He who pronounced from his cross, "It is finished," shall pronounce it from his throne ; and "the heavens and the earth shall pass away," and there shall be a "new heaven and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness." All shall be mental purity, intellectual vigour, and triumphant joy. The redeemed of God shall enter into their inheritance, and prepare for new scenes of the grandeur of their King and Redecmer ; new creations shall rise before them ; new wonders of benevolence shall kindle their hearts ; new developments of power shall fill their minds with delighted knowledge ; the Eternal King shall for ever pour upon them some new successive effulgence of his nature. **GOD SHALL BE ALL IN ALL.**

**THE END.**

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## P R E F A C E.

THE most important question that can be submitted to the human understanding, is, “Whether Christianity is true?” On this point all reasoners are agreed. Whatever belongs to the infinite future must be immeasurably more important than any interest bound up with so brief a date as the existence of man on earth ; and Christianity, professing not only to give assurance of an immortal duration, but to supply us with the means of making that duration a state of the highest dignity, security, and happiness, necessarily establishes a claim to be considered, in preference to any question arising merely from this world. A great number of works on the “Evidences of Christianity” have been published, especially in the Church of England, and their learning and honesty have done honour to that venerable protectress of all that is good and true in human principle. In offering a new tribute to that Church,

and to the Religion of which it has long been the most eminent champion, the writer of these pages is desirous only of treading in the same path of duty and of feeling.

Those works have adopted two distinct general forms of argument : evidence from the facts of history ; and evidence from human nature ; the former palpably the more forcible, for to *facts* there can be no answer ; the latter allowing the utmost extent of human ingenuity, and, on some minds, capable of exerting a very high degree of conviction. But the spirit of scepticism, however unable to refute, finds too easy a refuge from both. To the argument, from the progress of Christianity, from its early obscurity to its rapid influence, and from the singular simplicity of its means to its triumph over the arms and artifice of heathenism, he affects to reply by the extraordinary changes produced on the scale of nations by instruments of obvious simplicity, and points to the religious revolutions of the East, and the political phenomena of the West. His reply is thin and imperfect, but it covers the nakedness of his cause ; it protects him from the forced acknowledgment of discomfiture ; and Scepticism has never asked much more.

The argument from human nature, as less direct, is still more liable to evasion. Paley, who has done the greatest justice to this argument, and whose able work is now the popular autho-

rity, founds it on the two propositions—"1st. That there is satisfactory evidence that many, professing to be original witnesses of the Christian miracles, passed their lives in labours, dangers, and sufferings, voluntarily undergone in attestation of the accounts which they delivered, and solely in consequence of their belief of those accounts, and that they submitted, from the same motives, to new rules of conduct; 2dly, that there is *not* satisfactory evidence that persons professing to be original witnesses of other miracles, in their nature as certain as those are, have ever acted in the same manner, in attestation of the accounts which they delivered, and properly, in consequence of their belief of those accounts."

The consolation, the beauty, and the truth, of this argument to the Christian, are undeniable. But he must first be a Christian. There is nothing here to shut the mouth of the Sceptic, who is determined to subtilize himself out of all religion. He appeals to the common instances of imposture, of religious fanaticism, of that mixture of intellectual feebleness with religious ardor, which has filled the world with the follies or the furies of enthusiasm. His argument is utterly unsound, but it is specious. For, what solidity of argument can be built upon human motives? The two antagonists are contending in an element which forbids a solid footing. Truth and falsehood are struggling on the same surge, which lifts or sinks either

or both without reference to their cause. No Christian can read Paley's volume without feeling his faith strengthened. But it may be questioned whether it ever converted an infidel ; its proof is too elastic to bind the stubbornness of an infidel.

The most capable argument hitherto offered is undoubtedly that arising from the consecutive nature of the three dispensations ; for all that we can require for the truth of Christianity is, to prove that it has been the work of God. That fact once ascertained, its doctrines and promises must be received as they are given. But the succession of the three requires so much chastised and calm inquiry, which the indolence of scepticism will not undertake ; and so much clearing away of matters originating solely in local circumstance, of which its prejudice is glad to take advantage ; that hitherto few arguments have been less practically effectual.

The argument proposed in the present volume differs from all that have preceded it, much in principle, and totally in form. Its object is to prove that " Christianity is the direct work of Providence ;" and this, not by any mere probability arising from its original weakness and subsequent power ; nor from its moral superiority ; nor from the sufferings undergone by sincere minds in its cause ; nor even from its prophetic testimonies ; but from the comparison of facts acknowledged by all, with-

out reference to religious opinion. It will be shown that the leading facts of Christian-history have been the leading facts of the two former dispensations, Judæism and the Patriarchal religion; and that those facts have occurred in the three, not merely in essence, but with the same purpose, and in the same order; yet that no mere dry sequence has been observed in the order of the respective dispensations, but that they have received in each those slight variations of shape and colour which exhibit a supreme adapting hand, varying the process, but distinctly preserving the principle.

Those facts in the Patriarchal dispensation, were,—that man first remained for a certain period in a state, of which little more is known than that he existed—that he then became the father of two sons—that they offered sacrifices, of which one was rejected and the other received—that the elder slew the younger, was deprived of his inheritance, and exiled for ever—that a third son was born to supply the place of the slain brother—that he became the founder of a sacred line—that his descendants grew corrupt—that they were swept away by a great, direct act of Divine justice—that a remnant, who had adhered to virtue, were preserved by the Divine interposition—that from a state of suffering and desolation, they were suddenly raised into boundless dominion, and became the regenerators of the world—that a new apostasy arose, grew sin-

gularly powerful, crushed the pure family of the Patriarchal house, and, finally, was in its turn crushed by a direct interposition of Heaven<sup>1</sup>. It will be shown, that all those facts have been gone through *twice* subsequently, in the Jewish and Christian eras, with attendant circumstances, proving that Providence continued to exercise a constant provision for their performance, and for their suitability to the necessary changes arising from three states of mankind so totally distinct as those of the Patriarchal, the Jewish, and the Christian, world.

Whether this proof can be effected, the reader will ascertain in the subsequent pages. But if it can, there is an end to all defence on the part of Scepticism ; it may still determine to disbelieve ; but it cannot deny, with any claim to rationality. If three such series are established, maintaining this broad, plain, and unbroken parallelism with each other, it is utterly impossible to conceive that chance has had any thing to do with the subject. The most startling contradiction of the order of nature could not present a stronger difficulty, than the supposition that this connection was the work of casualty. If it be shown to be true ; the acknowledgment of a Providence. as the

<sup>1</sup> The Jewish series begins, not with the representative of Adam, but of Seth, and then proceeds regularly ; the Christian series begins with the representative of Adam, but of course the *completion* of the Cycle is still in the future. For the Sethite commencement of the Jewish a sufficient reason is assigned.

*Author of Christianity*, is no more capable of dispute than the properties of the triangle. It is demonstration.

But it will be found, that not merely the nature and order of the leading facts in the three dispensations are exactly the same, but that the individual characters of the leading men and nations are the same ; that individuals born two thousand years, and whole empires, asunder, have had precisely the same part in the several series ; with the same character of mind, the same successes, and reverses ; that Joseph in Egypt and St. Paul in Greece, that Ezra in Judæa and Luther in Germany, that Alexander in Asia and Napoleon in Europe, have especially been the direct providential agents in the *same* departments of their series ; and that among all the natural distinctions of country, objects, ability, and creed, they have been preserved in a singular adherence to the great predominating principle, of effecting the purposes of Heaven in the service of its revelation.

It is also perfectly probable, that to place the evidence of religion in this especial point of view, as the strongest, has been a peculiar purpose of Heaven ; from the very nature of types and prophecy. The chief value of prophecy is certainly not in what it could communicate at the time of its delivery ; for, excepting its occasional menaces to the guilt of the Jewish kings, its predictions, even of the character of the Messiah, were declaredly and in-



tentionally obscure. To us, who have seen its accomplishment, what is its chief value? Certainly not in giving us a knowledge of facts, of which we know enough from their occurrence before our eyes. Its chief value is, as proof that those facts have been long since contemplated by Providence, that they are a part of a plan, that Providence was the author of the plan, and was conversant and active in realizing the transaction. The types of Christ still more strongly sustain this view. To the actual type, or to the men of its age, the similitude must have been unknown, and therefore useless; to us, who have the history of Christ before us, his types are comparatively unimportant, as sources of knowledge, while his life remains written in the Gospels. Their chief value is, that they prove a *plan*, that they demonstrate an intention of Providence to act, ages before the intention was to be fulfilled, and that in the fulfilment they compel us to trace the action to the agency of Providence.

But considerations of the most solemn and anxious nature, must thus be opened to the view of European Protestantism. The heaviest scourge that fell upon Judah was the visitation of a period corresponding in all its characters to the period on which we are now entering. The personal alliances of the chosen people with the surrounding heathen; the consequent leaning to their opinions; and the partial adoption of their man-

ners ; were offences which, rapidly staining the purity of the national faith, were scourged with terrible severity.

Protestantism in Europe now stands precisely in the same position with Judah in the midst of the fallacies and temptations of the ancient world. Germany, the land of the Reformation, seems, even at this moment, to invite the scourge. The scandalous corruption of domestic life in her courts and cities, the jacobinical turbulence and vice of her colleges, and the enormous and even ostentatious infidelity of her theologians, have made that great country long a fearful object to every man who knows that for such things there is an inevitable reckoning. How far the innate virtue of Protestantism may be able to sustain itself, must be a trying question. But the era is already begun which shall see a general struggle of truth against fallacy and religious contamination throughout Europe. The scourge fell on the Jewish Church, in the interval succeeding the partition of the Macedonian empire. The interval succeeding the fall of the French empire, takes the same place in providential history, and will witness the same extent of evil, for the same exorbitant offence, upon the inheritor of the spirit and privileges of Judah, the Church of European Protestantism. As Epiphanes prostrated the Jewish altars, crushed the nation, and dragged the people in chains to a senseless and abhorred

worship ; Europe may yet see the Church all but extinguished, its temples desecrated, and some new shape of tyranny, thoroughly *infidel*, forcing upon all men some new and monstrous observances, on penalty of the worst vengeance that belongs to the heart of a tyrant. From this intolerable shame and torment some may escape ; but they will be protected only for their clearness from the original crime of the nation. But many even of the pure will suffer, as in all persecutions ; and be called on by Heaven to give up their lives in attestation of their faith. There will be finally a renewal of martyrdoms to a great extent, followed by reactions, and those again followed by new horrors of pollution and blood ; until the full satisfaction shall have been made.

Strong and high coloured as views of this kind may appear, they are but the mere restatement of facts which have already been before the eyes of mankind. We have but to read the Book of Maccabees, to see what miseries may await nations which allow religion to fall to the ground through native negligence, or the adoption of foreign crime. If we are to be told, that in a civilized age such things are impossible, we have only to turn to the pages of the last half century, and refer the doubter to the transcript there by the hand of Revolution, in the most polished period of the most polished nation, the Greece of the modern world. We are now actually entering on

that period known in prediction as the Fifth Seal ; in which it is declared to the spirits of those who in the early ages died for the faith, that but a comparatively brief time shall elapse before they shall see their number completed<sup>1</sup>. Those views are not offered to excite needless alarm, but to awaken salutary caution. The future decay of Christianity was undoubtedly contemplated by its Divine Author. He declares that, at his second coming, he shall scarcely discover a trace of religion : “ where shall he find faith upon the earth ? ” that mankind shall be totally engrossed by the objects of the senses, and all that belongs to the future world will be almost totally obliterated from the human mind ; yet that a remnant shall exist, and be finally secure. It is in every man’s power to make one of that remnant ; just as much as it is in his power to avoid any penalty of human law. The vigilant will be generally secure, even in the time of religious casualty. The virtuous, in the worst extremity, will be universally secure from the “ sting ” that

<sup>1</sup> “ And when he had opened the Fifth Seal, I saw under the altar the souls of them that were slain for *the Word of God*, and for *the testimony which they held* : and they cried with a loud voice, saying, How long, O Lord, holy and true, dost thou not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth ? And white robes were given unto every one of them ; and it was said unto them, that they should rest yet for *a little season*, until their fellow-servants also, and their brethren, that should be *killed as they were*, should be *fulfilled*.” (Rev. vi. 9—11.)

alone makes death an evil. In what form the penalty may approach; whether, as in the days of the Syrian and Egyptian wars, in the concussions of governments, and the furies of that struggle between the great powers of the North and the South, for which such ample elements seem to be stored up at this moment; whether in civil havoc; or in some inconceivable generation of public evil, some fire-winged and iron-fanged destroyer, springing up from the black abyss of sacrilege and infidelity;—those are things wrapt in the mysteries of time. But they will come; and woe be to the nation and to the man who is not awake when they come<sup>1</sup>.

<sup>1</sup> There are no data whatever for the *time*, more than for the form. The usual calculations of the coming of “the kingdom,” taken from Daniel, are entirely erroneous. The 1290 days, and the 1335 days, (xii. 11, 12.) solely refer to the period of the devastation under Antiochus Epiphanes, “when the daily sacrifice was taken away, and the abomination of desolation,” his standard, was set up in the captive city; they are literal *days*, answering to the literal period of the desolation; and they are completely and obviously separated from the prophecy of “the end,” the coming of that period, when Daniel, with the other saints, is to rise, and “stand in his lot.” On the other hand, the prophecy of the “time, times and a half,” by its very expression (its date is 1000 years later), is different. It refers to the 1260 years of Christian depression, under the influence which, beginning in the year A. D. 533, restrained the liberty of the Scriptures, until the period was wholly closed by the French republican war, in 1793. No prediction whatever gives us ground for *calculating the epoch* of the second coming.

It is to be added, that the work now offered to the Christian is not *controversial*. It scarcely alludes to opinion ; it does not willingly contain a syllable offensive to the opinions of any body of Christians. While all are objects of the compassion of God, there can be no reason why even their errors should divorce them from the good-will of his creatures. Even where the truth of history has pressed hardest, the pressure has certainly not been aggravated by any contumely. Nothing has been an object of solicitude but the argument. Let it be calmly examined. If it be established, we shall no more have infidel historians. Instead of perplexing himself with looking for the principles of national change among the blind intricacies and stolid subtleties of the world, the historian will look upward, and make his way by the lights hung in heaven <sup>1</sup>.

And this is only conformable to the declaration of our Lord, that it was a knowledge entirely reserved from man. "Of that day and hour knoweth no man." He revealed the date of the fall of Jerusalem freely, fixing it within the living generation ; but the remote and final catastrophe was essentially to be a surprise to all mankind.

The writer desires the more peculiarly to express this opinion, as in his " Interpretation of the Apocalypse" he had given way to the concurrent idea of the commentators, that the numbers of Daniel were in this instance connected with the numbers of the Book of Revelation. He omitted the statement in the subsequent edition.

<sup>1</sup> Historians, even when unstained with infidelity, seem

in general to have unaccountably forgotten that a Providence existed. But the late work of Dr. Miller, of Armagh, "History Philosophically Illustrated," redeems at least the present day from this dishonour. It is, beyond comparison, the best Modern History of Europe, learned and accurate without tediousness, and religious without affectation. It ought to be in the hands of every scholar, every gentleman, and every man who desires to have a comprehension of the spirit of European history.









**DIVINE PROVIDENCE;**  
OR, THE  
**THREE CYCLES OF REVELATION,**  
SHOWING THE  
**PARALLELISM OF THE PATRIARCHAL, JEWISH,**  
**AND CHRISTIAN DISPENSATIONS.**

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BEING A NEW EVIDENCE OF  
THE DIVINE ORIGIN OF CHRISTIANITY.

BY THE  
**REV. GEORGE CROLY, LL.D.**  
RECTOR OF BONDLEIGH, DEVON.

“ The appearance of the wheels and their work was like unto the colour of a beryl: and they four had one likeness: and their appearance and their work was as it were a wheel in the middle of a wheel. They turned not when they went. As for their rings, they were so high that they were dreadful; and their rings were full of eyes.”—EZEKIEL i. 16—18.

LONDON:  
JAMES DUNCAN, PATERNOSTER ROW.  
1834.



TO

THE LORD BROUGHAM AND VAUX,

LORD HIGH CHANCELLOR OF ENGLAND,

THIS VOLUME

IS, WITH GREAT RESPECT, INSCRIBED

BY HIS VERY FAITHFUL

AND OBEDIENT SERVANT,

GEORGE CROLY.

